



*The*

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# MENTOR

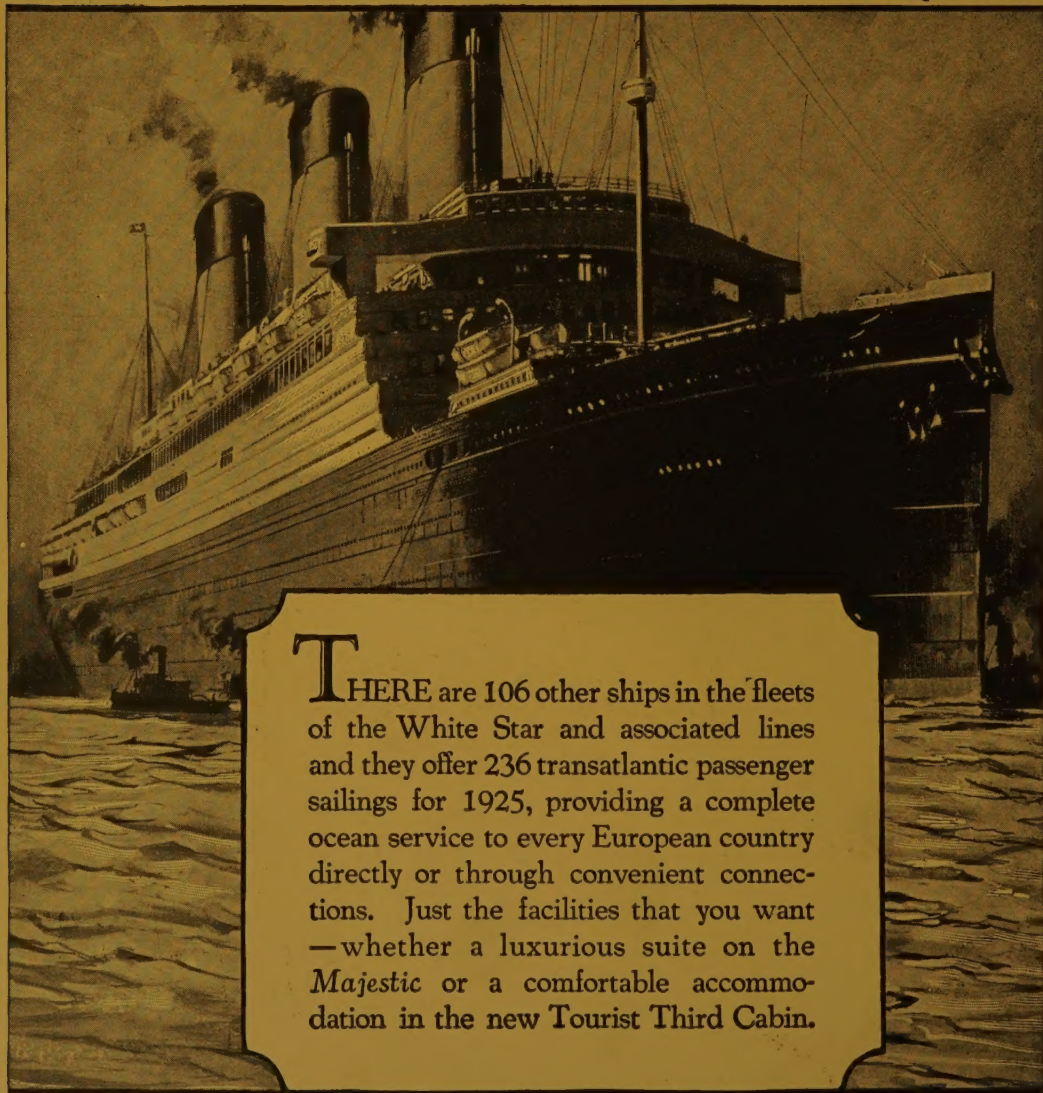
MARCH 1925



JOSEPH CONRAD, PERSONAL MEMORIES  
OLD NEW ORLEANS ILLUSTRATED

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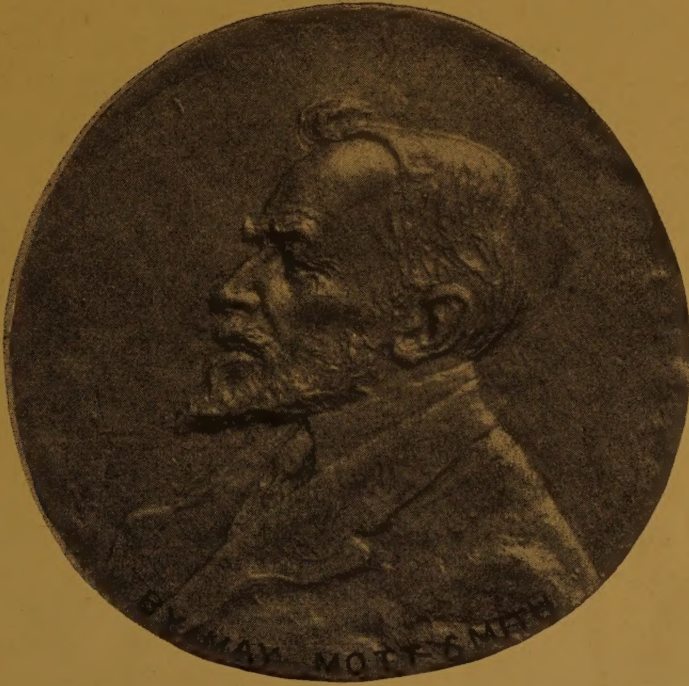
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# JOSEPH CONRAD

MASTER SEAMAN AND MASTER WRITER



JOSEPH CONRAD

Portrait sketch made during the author's visit to the United States  
in May, 1923

**F**OR the first twenty years of his life Conrad chafed for the sea and the radiant lands of the South. For the next twenty years his face was turned to the gales of the Seven Seas, and the buffets of men and the elements. In the last twenty years the sailor who had brooded on life's mysteries became the artist-writer. At first appreciated exclusively as an "author's author," he finally won worldwide recognition, and then abruptly left the stage, asserting in his own career the irony of life that was the keynote of so much he had written



#### CONRAD'S LAST VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES

Conrad standing between Captain Bone and Muirhead Bone on the deck of the *Tuscania* when she arrived in New York harbor. It shows the circumstances that had to be created to get Conrad to visit the United States. Either because of his health or because of his inherent shyness, it was necessary for his close friend, the eminent English etcher, Mr. Muirhead Bone, to accompany him, and bring him on the ship of another intimate friend, Captain Bone

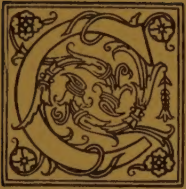
# The MENTOR

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NO. 265

MARCH, 1925



## CONRAD \* \* \* MEMORIES \* \* \*

PRINTED FOR MENTOR  
READERS WITH MR. CON-  
RAD'S SPECIAL CONSENT

EDITORIAL NOTE: The life of this eminent novelist falls naturally into three divisions: his birth (1857) and early years in Poland, until he was sixteen; then his twenty years at sea, which included voyages to the East by way of the Cape and the Horn; and finally his "writing life," since 1894, when he left the sea, invalided home. He was married in 1896 and lived chiefly in Kent, England, where his wife and two sons, Borys and John, still reside.



CONRAD AT SIXTEEN

From an old photograph taken in 1873 while Conrad was attending the Royal and Imperial Gymnasium of St. Anne at Cracow, Poland

It was in the jolly year 1873, the very last year in which I have had a jolly holiday. It was the year in which I had first spoken aloud of my desire to go to sea. At first, like those sounds that, ranging outside the scale to which men's ears are attuned, remain inaudible to our sense of hearing, this declaration passed unperceived. It was as if it had not been. Later on, by trying various tones, I managed to arouse here and there a surprised momentary attention, the "What was that funny noise?" sort of inquiry. Later on it was: "Did you hear what that boy said? What an extraordinary outbreak!" Presently a wave of scandalized astonishment (it could not have been greater if I had announced the intention of entering a Carthusian monastery) ebbing out of the educational and academical town of Cracow spread itself over several provinces. People wondered what Mr. T. B. would do now with his worrying nephew and, I dare say, hoped kindly that he would make short work of my nonsense.

The truth is that what I had in mind was not a naval career, but the sea. There seemed to be no way open to it but through France. I had the language at any rate, and of all the countries of Europe it is with France that Poland has the most connection. Letters were being written, answers were being received, arrangements were being made for my departure for Marseilles.

The very first whole day I ever spent on salt water was by invitation, in a big half-decked pilot boat. They were hospitable souls, these sturdy Provençal seamen. I well remember the last night spent with the pilots of the Third Company. It was on this occasion that my hand touched

NOTE: The Editor of The Mentor acknowledges with full appreciation the generous coöperation of Messrs. Doubleday, Page and Company—both for the use of pictures in their possession and for their assistance in securing material for this number.



CONRAD'S LAST SHIP

The full-rigged wool clipper *Torrens*, a beautiful copper-fastened ship with teak planking, that sailed a steady three hundred and thirty knots a day with dry decks. This model was made by Captain Armitage McCann, who sailed on her as a cabin boy the year after Conrad made a voyage to Australia, with the novelist John Galsworthy as a passenger

for the first time the side of an English ship.

She was a big, high-class cargo steamer of a type that is to be met on the sea no more—black hull, with low, white superstructures, powerfully rigged with three masts and a lot of yards on the fore. The name—I read it letter by letter on the bow—was *James Westoll*. To me the very grouping of the letters is alive with

the romantic feeling of her reality as I saw her floating motionless and borrowing an ideal grace from the austere purity of the light.

A few strokes brought us alongside, and it was then that, for the very first time in my life, I heard myself addressed in English—the speech of my secret choice, of my future, of long friendships, of the deepest affections, of hours of toil and hours of ease, and of solitary hours too, of books read, of thoughts pursued, of remembered emotions, of my very dreams! As to the quality of the address itself I cannot say it was very striking. Too short for eloquence and devoid of all charm of tone, it consisted precisely of the three words, “Look out there!” growled out huskily above my head.

The dinghy came with a slight bump against the steamer’s side; the pilot, grabbing the rope ladder, had scrambled halfway up before I knew that our task of boarding was done; the harsh, muffled clanging of the engine-room telegraph struck my ear through the iron plate; my companion in the dinghy was urging me to “shove off—push hard;” and when I bore against the smooth flank of the first English ship I ever touched in my life I felt it already throbbing under my open palm.

At nineteen years of age, after a period of probation and training I had imposed upon myself as ordinary seaman on board a North Sea coaster, I had come up from Lowestoft—my first long railway journey in England—to “sign on” for an Antipodean voyage in a deep-water ship.

All the help I had to get in touch with the world I was invading was a piece of paper not much bigger than the palm of my hand—in which I held it—torn out of a larger plan of London for the greater facility of reference. It had been the object of careful study for some weeks past. Another

## CONRAD MEMORIES

document, a cutting from a newspaper, containing the address of an obscure shipping agent, was in my pocket. That address was as if graven deep in my brain. I muttered its words to myself as I walked on, navigating the sea of London by the chart concealed in the palm of my hand; for I had vowed to myself not to inquire my way from anyone.

It was one o'clock in the afternoon, but the day was gloomy. By the light of a single gas jet depending from the smoked ceiling I saw an elderly man, in a long coat of black broadcloth. He had a gray beard, a big nose, thick lips, and heavy shoulders. His early white hair and the general character of his head recalled vaguely a burly apostle in the *barocco* style of Italian art. Standing up at a tall, shabby, slanting desk, his silver-rimmed spectacles pushed up high on his forehead, he was eating a mutton chop, which had just been brought to him from some Dickensian eating house round the corner.

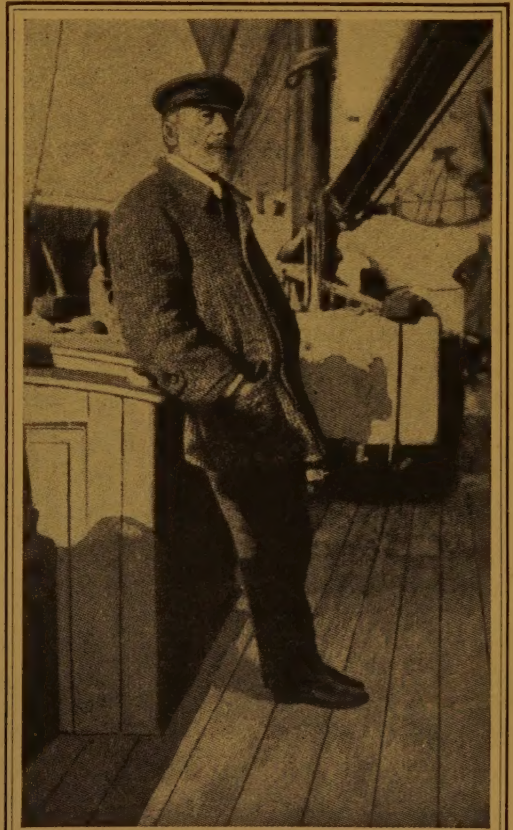
Without ceasing to eat, he turned to me his florid *barocco* apostle's face with an expression of inquiry.

I produced elaborately a series of vocal sounds which must have borne sufficient resemblance to the phonetics of English speech, for his face broke into a smile of comprehension almost at once. "Oh, it's you who wrote a letter to me the other day from Lowestoft about getting a ship."

I had written to him from Lowestoft. I can't remember a single word of that letter now. It was my very first composition in the English language.

He was good enough to say then: "Of course, I see that you are a gentleman. But your wish is to get a berth before the mast as an able seaman if possible. Is that it?"

It was certainly my wish; but he stated doubtfully that he feared he could not help me much in this. There was an act of Parliament which made it penal to procure ships for sailors. "An act—of Parliament. A law," he took pains to impress it again and again on my foreign under-



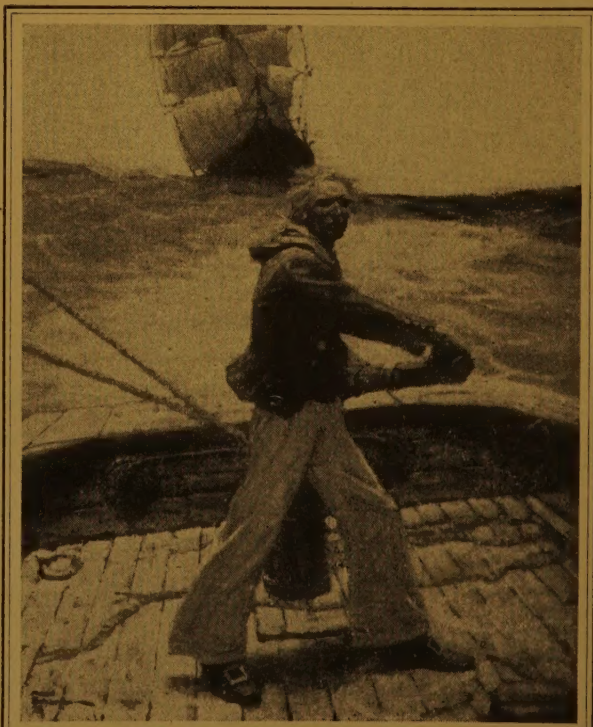
CONRAD DURING THE WORLD WAR

On the deck of a trawler. To keep up the morale of the nation, celebrated authors cruised in naval airplanes and went out on U-boat patrol. Conrad sailed on the first U-boat prowl on a tramp vessel seventy years old, that had a rotten foremast and that shipped seven or eight feet of water from leakage, but he thoroughly enjoyed the voyage

standing, while I looked at him in consternation. It was too much for me.

I had not been in London half an hour before I had run my head against an act of Parliament! What a hopeless adventure! However, the *barocco* apostle was a resourceful person in his way, and we managed to get around the hard letter of it without damage to its fine spirit. . . . Yet, strictly speaking, it was not the conduct of a good citizen; and in retrospect there is an unfilial flavor about this early sin of mine. For this act of Parliament, the Merchant Shipping Act of the Victorian era, had been, in a manner of speaking, a father and mother to me. For many years it had regulated and disciplined my life, prescribed my food and the amount of my breathing space, had looked after my health and tried as much as possible to secure my personal safety in a risky calling. It isn't such a bad thing to lead a life of hard toil and plain duty within the four corners of an honest act of Parliament. . . .

Allowed to share in this work and in this tradition for something like twenty years, I am bold enough to think I am not altogether unworthy to speak of it. It was the sphere not only of my activity but, I may safely say, also my affections; but after such a close connection it is very difficult to avoid bringing one's own personality . . . I can safely affirm that I have never, never seen British seamen refuse any risk, any exertion, any effort of the spirit or body, up to the extremest demands of their calling. Years ago—it seems ages ago—I have seen the crew of a British ship fight the fire in the cargo for a whole sleepless week and then, with their decks blown up, I have seen them still continue to fight to save the floating shell. And at last I have seen them refuse to be taken off by vessels standing by, and this only in order “to see the last of our ship,” at the word, at the simple word, of a man who commanded them, a worthy soul indeed, but of no heroic aspect. I have seen that. I have shared their days in small boats. Hard days. Ages ago. . . .



“THE ROVER”

From a painting by Mead Sheaffer. It illustrates an exciting moment in the book, probably the passage describing the ship *Amelia* rushing after the *Tartane* with swelling sails



#### CONRAD ON HIS LAST CRUISE

A picture showing Conrad as chief officer of the *Torrens*, the last ship he sailed, with his second and third officers and the last group of boys that passed through his hands. The boy seated on the left was drowned saving life at sea, the boy next to him became a captain in the Indian marines, and the one on the right was captain of a gunboat in the Chinese customs service

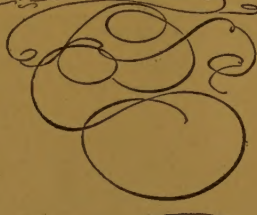
It was my first voyage to the East and my first voyage as second mate; it was also my skipper's first command.

I need not tell you what it is to be knocking about in an open boat. I remember nights and days of calm when we pulled, we pulled, and the boat seemed to stand still, as if bewitched within the circle of the sea horizon.

## THE VOYAGES OF CAPT CONRAD *Sojournes and scenes of The severall bookes*

<sup>1</sup> ALMAYERS FOLLY—Eastern  
An Outpost of the ISLANDS Borneo  
<sup>2</sup> THE NIGGER of the MARCSUS Bombay to  
London, course of Narcissus  
TALES OF UNREST  
<sup>3</sup> KARAI—Mindanao Island, Philippines  
<sup>4</sup> THE IDIOT—Brilliant. An Outpost of Pro-  
gress—The Congo. The Return—London  
Juburb. The Bagoon—Eastern Borneo  
<sup>5</sup> LORD JIM—Arabian Sea, scene of fatal  
accident. Trial scene in Singapore. Palla-  
san in Sumatra  
<sup>6</sup> THE INHERITOR—Canterbury London,  
Paris  
YOUTH and Two Other Stories  
<sup>7</sup> Youth—London to Java Sea, course of  
the Judea  
<sup>8</sup> Heart of Darkness—London to Stanley  
Falls, via Boma. The End of the Tether  
Strait Settlements and Sumatra.  
TYPHOON and Other Stories  
<sup>9</sup> Typhoon—China Sea, between Formosa  
and Fu-Chau. Amy Foster—Probably Suf-  
sex Coast. Falk—Harbour of Bangkok  
To-morrow—Probably Sussex Coast  
<sup>10</sup> ROMANCE—Jamaica and Cuba.  
<sup>11</sup> NOSTROMO—West Coast of South Am.  
<sup>12</sup> THE MIRROR of the SEA—Voyage a-  
round the Horn, one of many voyages  
mentioned in this book of sea ex-  
periences.  
THE SECRET AGENT—London  
A SET OF SIX  
<sup>13</sup> Caspar Ruiz—West Coast of South Am.  
The Informer—London. The Brute  
Sydney to London, via the Horn. An  
Anarchist—Paris and French Guiana  
The Duel—Strasbourg, Austerlitz, Jena,  
Moscow, Paris, Southern France, etc.  
Il Conde, Naples

<sup>14</sup> UNDER WESTERN EYES—Petrograd  
and Geneva  
<sup>15</sup> A PERSONAL RECORD—Cracow,  
Conrad's boyhood home. Book also in-  
cludes Marseilles, London, Africa, the  
East, and incidents at sea.  
TWIXT LAND and SEA  
<sup>16</sup> A Smile of Fortune—Island of Mauri-  
tius. The Secret Sharer—Gulf of Siam  
Freya of the Seven Isles—Off Celebes.  
CHANCE—England. Course of Fern-  
dale, London to Port Elizabeth  
WITHIN THE TIDES  
<sup>17</sup> The Planter of Malda—Australia and  
probably a Melanesian island.  
The Partner—Probably Sussex or  
Kentish Coast. The Inn of the Two  
Witches—North Coast of Spain  
Because of the Dollar—Probably Sing-  
apore  
<sup>18</sup> VICTORY—Tiger Island—off Celebes  
<sup>19</sup> THE SHADOW-LINE—Gulf of Siam  
<sup>20</sup> THE ARROW of GOLD—Marseilles.  
<sup>21</sup> THE RESCUE—Opens off West coast  
of Borneo.  
NOTES on LIFE and LETTERS—  
London and Poland  
<sup>22</sup> THE ROVER—Toulon and French  
coast of Mediterranean.



*Esther M. Norton*

I remember the heat, the deluge of rain squalls that kept us bailing for dear life (but filled our water cask), and I remember sixteen hours on end with a mouth dry as a cinder and a steering oar over the stern to keep my first command head on to a breaking sea. I did not know how good a man I was till then. I remember the drawn faces, the dejected figures of my two men, and I remember my youth and the feeling that will never come back any more, the feeling that I could last forever, outlast the sea, the earth, and all men, the deceitful feeling that lures us on to joys, to perils, to love, to vain effort, to death, the triumphant conviction of strength, the heat of life in the handful of dust, the glow in the heart that

with every year grows dim, grows cold, grows small and expires—and expires too soon—before life itself.

And this is how I see the East. I have seen its secret places and have looked into its very soul; but now I see it always from a small boat, a high outline of mountains, blue and afar in the morning; like faint mist at noon; a jagged wall of purple sunset. I have the feel of the oar in my hand, the vision of a scorching blue sea in my eyes. And I see a bay, a wide bay, smooth as glass and polished like ice, shimmering in the dark. A red light burns far off upon the gloom of the land, and the night is soft and warm. We drag at the oars with aching arms, and suddenly a puff of wind, a puff faint and tepid and laden with strange odors of blossoms, of aromatic wood, comes out of the still night—the first sigh of the East on my face. That I can never forget.



#### USING THE SEXTANT FOR THE LAST TIME

During the days when Conrad followed the sea the sextant had helped him steer his ships into many harbors of the globe. Conrad is standing here with his friend Captain Bone on the bridge of the liner *Tuscania* as they were approaching New York on his first and only visit to the United States, in 1923

## CONRAD MEMORIES

It was impalpable and enslaving, like a charm, like a whispered promise of mysterious delight.

Most of my sea life I remember, but what I was reading the day before my writing life began I have forgotten.

For many years Almayer and the world of his story had been the companions of my imagination, without, I hope, impairing my ability to deal with the realities of sea life. I had had the man and his surroundings with me ever since my return from Eastern waters—some four years before the day of which I speak.

It was in the front sitting-room of furnished apartments in a Pimlico square that they first began to live again with a vividness and poignancy quite foreign to our former real intercourse. They did not clamor aloud for my attention. They came with a silent and irresistible appeal, and the appeal, I affirm here, was not to my self-love or to my vanity.

It seems now to have had a moral character, for why should the memory of these beings, seen in their obscure, sun-bathed existence, demand to express itself in the shape of a novel, except on the ground of that mysterious fellowship which unites in a community of hopes and fears all the dwellers of this earth?

After all these years, each leaving its evidence of slowly blackened pages, I can honestly say that it is a sentiment akin to pity which prompted me to render in words assembled with conscientious care the

memory of things far distant and of men who had lived.

Having matured in the surroundings and under the special conditions of sea life, I have a special piety toward that form of my past; for its impressions were vivid, its appeal direct, its demands such as could be responded to with the natural elation of youth and strength equal to the call.

There was nothing in them to perplex a young conscience. Having broken away from my origins to voice an



A MEMORABLE SPOT IN CONRAD'S LIFE

It was here, at Tower Garden, London, that Conrad, after a long voyage on the *Narcissus*, parted with his crew and shipmates. They disappeared into the mist and roar of the city. He never saw them again.



"CHAPEL HOUSE." ORLESTONE

A former home of the Conrads. The dog was given to the Conrad children by Stephen Crane

opinion, removed by great distances from such natural affections as were still left to me and even estranged, in a measure, from them by the totally unintelligible character of the life which had seduced me so mysteriously from my allegiance, I may safely say that through the blind force of circumstance the sea was to be all my world and the merchant service my only home for a long succession of years.

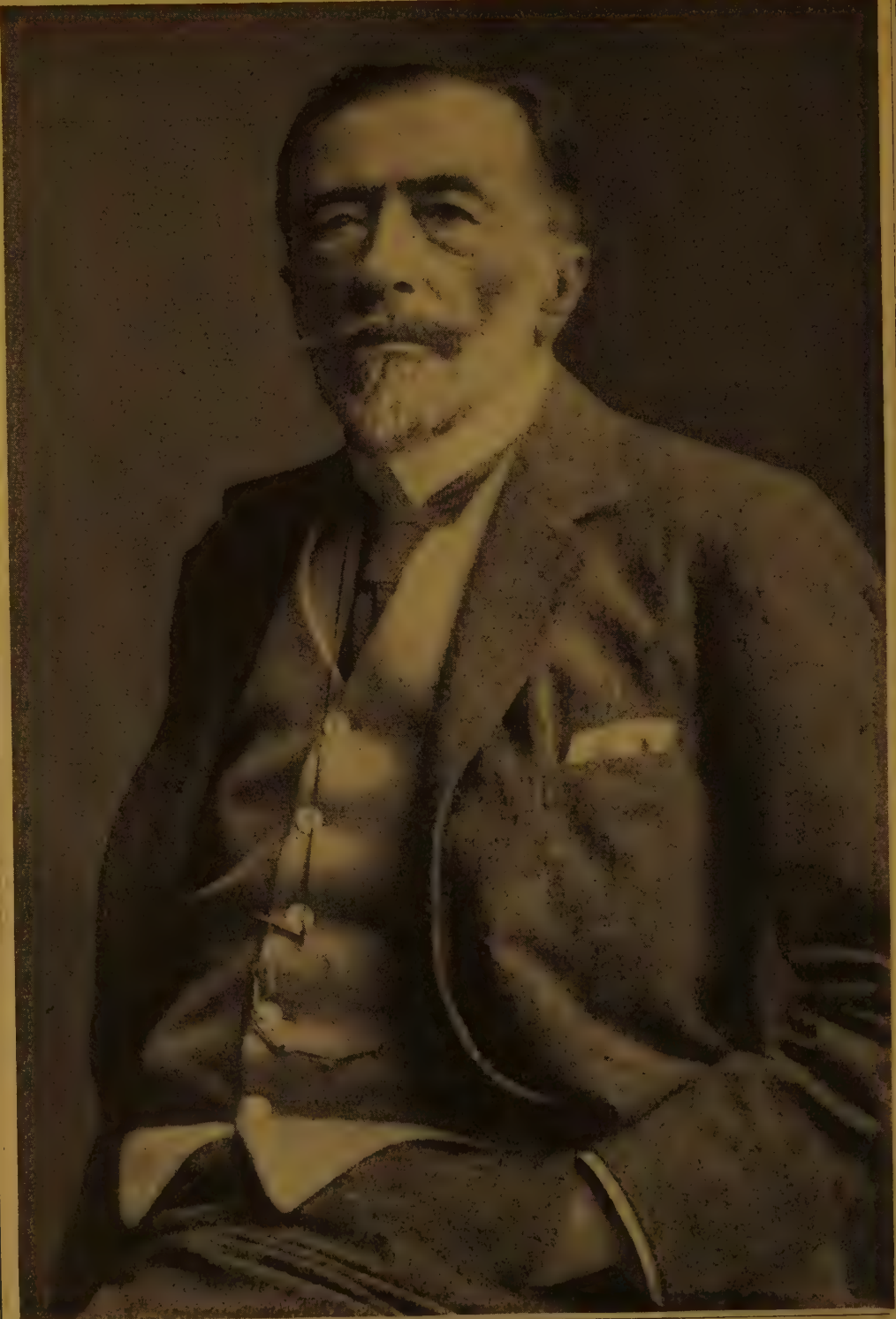
No wonder, then, that in my two exclusively sea books—"The Nigger of the Narcissus" and "The Mirror of the Sea," and in the few short stories like "Youth" and "Typhoon"—I have tried with an almost filial regard to render the vibration of life in the great world of waters, in the

hearts of the simple men who have for ages traversed its solitudes, and also that something sentient which seems to dwell in ships—the creatures of their hands and the objects of their care.

A gone shipmate, like any other man, is gone forever. But at times the spring flood of memory sets with force up the dark River of the Nine Bends. Then, on the waters of the forlorn stream, drifts a ship, a shadowy ship manned by a crew of shades. They pass and make a sign, in a shadowy hail. Haven't we, together and upon the immortal sea, wrung out a meaning from our sinful lives? Good-by, brothers! You were a good crowd. As good a crowd as ever fisted with wild cries the beating canvas of a heavy foresail; or tossing aloft, invisible in the night, gave back yell for yell to a westerly gale.



MR. CONRAD AT THE WHEEL



CONRAD IN 1920

It shows him in the maturity of his power and approaching the climax of his literary career



# THE LAST OF CONRAD

BY RICHARD CURLE

EDITORIAL: Mr. Curle was for years a close personal friend of Joseph Conrad.



I have written this short account of Joseph Conrad's last day because I was with him alone during his final hours of life and sat with him when he was dying, and I think it proper that a record should be made while a record is still possible.

It was about eleven when I arrived at "Oswalds" on the night of Friday, August 1st. The train from Victoria had been late, owing to its being so near the Bank Holiday, and Conrad had not waited up for me, but was in bed reading. I went straight to him and he told me to have some supper and then come upstairs to his room again for a talk. He always had supper waiting for me when I traveled by this train—he and his wife were infinitely thoughtful in small things as well as large—and I remembered how, on that Friday night, he jokingly described to me what I would find below.

When I had had supper I came and sat by his bedside. I had done it many, many times. Of recent years he had taken to going to bed earlier, and, instead of talking in his study till one or two in the morning, we used generally to finish the evening in his room, where, propped up by pillows, he would discourse at large with all his illumination and brilliance.

He appeared particularly well and in singularly good spirits. The fact that his wife was once more in the house—she had returned eight days previously from six weeks in a Canterbury nursing home—and his freedom from gout had a soothing effect on him, and his talk was full of vivacity.

He began by chaffing me, in his affectionate way, on having something up my sleeve.

"You're smiling! What is it now? Have you any news for me?"

He was always like that—a friend who entered into all one's joys and sorrows, into the big things and the little.

"Well, Dick," he burst out all at once, "I've good



WHERE "LORD JIM" WAS WRITTEN

"Pent Farm," the cottage in Kent in which Conrad wrote "Lord Jim" and "Heart of Darkness," the somber story of Africa reminiscent of his own experiences in the Dark Continent four years after it was explored by Stanley



ONE OF CONRAD'S HOMES

Where he wrote "Under Western Eyes" and where Stephen Crane was a frequent visitor. In the foreground can be seen Conrad's elder son, Borys, and the dog Escamillo

news for you. I believe I've found a house."

Conrad was naturally averse to a long sojourn in one home. He had been five years at "Oswalds" and, delightful though it was, it had begun to irk him.

He was quite elated. They were leaving "Oswalds," in any case, at the end of September, and the question of where to go had been worrying them all. It was his chauffeur, Vinten, who had recently discovered this other place, eight miles

from "Oswalds" along the Dover Road, and Conrad had been over to inspect it a few days before.

"I want to take you to see it to-morrow," he said to me, and he enlarged enthusiastically upon its aspect, its rooms, its gardens, its garage.

Then he switched off the subject of the house and began to talk to me about his fragment of a novel, "The Sisters," eight or twelve thousand words in length, which had been put aside many years before. His mind was full of plans that night.

And then—apropos of an article in the current number of the "Times Literary Supplement"—he slipped into a kind of monologue about the Second Empire. As though he had been concerned in it himself, he discussed, with graphic asides, its tortuous policies and outstanding figures.

I don't know how long I sat with him, perhaps an hour and a half, and when I went to bed it was not only with no sense of anything wrong—I knew nothing then of the premonitory attack he had had a day or two before—but with a feeling that he was better than I had seen him for a considerable time.

And at breakfast the next morning that feeling still continued. It is true that he informed me that he had not slept till four, but then he was always a poor sleeper, and he was so cheerful, and apparently so well, that I did not give it a serious thought.

We breakfasted alone. To those who know Conrad only from his books, who have formed from their lofty and often somber pages a picture of the man himself as aloof and unapproachable, the real Conrad, the intimate Conrad of old friendships, would have been a revelation. There was, in truth, a zest of affectionate playfulness about him, perfect in its charm.

Yes, in many respects a mysterious and complex man, when he really made a friend he accepted him once and for all. Perhaps, as I have already suggested, nobody profoundly understood him; for, putting aside his lonely creative gift, there were in him deep strata of ironic melancholy, aristocratic contempt, and exasperated disillusionment; but it is certain that, for the people for whom he cared, he had a simplicity of affection which allowed for everything and overlooked all shortcomings.

After breakfast we went into his study and he began to talk to me of the novel he was then writing, "Suspense," and of the article, "Legends," he was just finishing.

"My mind seems clearer than it has been for months," he said, "and I shall soon get hold of my work again." Those were his words, "Soon get hold of my work again."

He was marvelously vital and, if it had not been for his gouty cough, which appeared to be rather more troublesome than usual, better apparently than he had been for ages.

He rose and went to his table, and I took up the morning paper. He worked with concentration, without speaking, until, at eleven, the car was announced.

He talked animatedly in the car. He was looking forward to getting into his new home and was hoping I would approve his choice.

We had gone about four miles when suddenly he passed his hand across his chest. "I feel that pain I had a few days ago," he said.

I suggested turning back, but he wouldn't hear of it. "No, I dare say it's nothing. I want you to see the place."

But I saw that he was not well, and again I suggested turning back.

"No, no, I don't want to frighten Jessie."

"I'm sure you won't frighten her, Conrad, and I can see the house to-morrow. Do let us turn back."

This time he yielded, and the car was headed for "Oswalds." We had been within a mile and a half of our destination.

"Ah, I feel better," he exclaimed. "But perhaps it was as well that we turned back. One does not know what it'll do next."

❖ ❖ ❖

The relief was only momentary and he was ob-



SNAPSHOT OF MRS. CONRAD AND CONRAD'S TWO SONS  
Taken on the day "The Duel" was finished

## THE LAST OF CONRAD

viously suffering when he regained his home. He sat down on the settee in the hall and swallowed some hot water. It was drafts of hot water that had seemed to help him during his former attack.

After a few minutes he went to his room, and presently he had me fetched. He was sitting up in his bed and decidedly easier.

"The walk upstairs did me good," he remarked.

But that again was only a temporary relief, and he soon gave instructions for his own doctor from Ashford to be telephoned for.

"I am glad you are here with me," he said, and added words about our friendship, beautiful and moving to remember. I sat with him a long time.

The doctor arrived early in the afternoon. He made a careful examination, said cheering words, and left a prescription and instructions for a diet.

Conrad sent for me again. The paroxysms and the pains seemed to be increasing and the intervals of ease were growing less.

"I don't like it," he said gravely. "I've been so free from gout lately. I don't like these symptoms," and he made an ominous, vague gesture.

Next door, Mrs. Conrad, unable to move, was lying on a couch and I had tea there with her. During tea, a telegram arrived to say that Lady Colvin, a very old friend of the Conrads, was dead. Conrad called out, "Who



"OSWALDS," AT BISHOPSBOURNE, KENT, WHERE CONRAD DIED

Within sight of Canterbury Cathedral. The house is surrounded with flower gardens and boxwood hedges, while plum and apple trees are trained against the rose-brick walls



THE LIVING-ROOM  
AT "OSWALDS" ❀

Conrad's home was a week-end rendezvous for interesting people. Here came frequently Sir Hugh Clifford, Galsworthy, Cunninghame Grahame, John Powell, and many others. In this room, fortified by biscuits and Russian tea, Conrad talked brilliantly

is that telegram from?" He had heard the bell—and he was concerned.

"It's about Lady Colvin," his wife called back.

"Is she better?"

"No, not better," answered his wife.

Conrad made no response.

Even then, unconscious though I was of anything really serious, his silence came to me with a sort of pang. It was as if he had not dared to inquire further.

About eight o'clock his two sons, his eldest son's wife, and his little grandson of six months arrived by motor from London. They had not been specially summoned—nobody realized the danger, but had come down by arrangement to spend the Bank Holiday at home. Conrad insisted on his daughter-in-law and his grandson being brought to his bedside at once; there must be no delay—it was, indeed, as though he knew that it was his last chance of seeing them.

His breathing had become bad, and a doctor was summoned from Canterbury, which is only about four and a half miles from "Oswalds," as against Ashford's sixteen; but this doctor too, having regarded the excellence of the pulse, did not seem to be alarmed, though he ordered cylinders of oxy-

## THE LAST OF CONRAD

gen to be sent out from Canterbury Hospital to relieve the breathing.

It was impossible, after the repeated assurances of these two skilled doctors, to believe that there was anything very seriously the matter. Even his dreadful fighting for breath was assumed by all of us to have its origin in violent asthmatic indigestion, and when he panted out in one of his gasping fits that he couldn't get better we, having seen him so often in illness and despondency, did not take the words at their full value. But throughout his life he had been a man of few illusions and I think, perhaps, he was under no illusion then.

But his thoughtfulness for others, which was always apparent, did not desert him. When, later in the evening, his younger son and I were in his room he begged us to leave so that we should not have the pain of seeing him suffer. "Go away, dear boys, I can't bear you to see me like this."

There was nothing more I could do, though, indeed, I had done nothing. I went to bed with no actual forebodings of a crisis, but with a gloom I could not shake off.

The night passed as the day. He got out of bed and insisted on sitting



THE FUNERAL OF JOSEPH CONRAD

The coffin, preceded by the clergy and followed by well-known literary friends of the distinguished author, in Canterbury Cemetery. The sadness of the hearts of the band of followers was in dramatic contrast to the merrymaking of a celebration that was taking place at the same time in the village



CONRAD'S GRAVE IN CANTERBURY

up in his chair, dozing off for a few minutes at a time. At six in the morning he seemed to be easier and told his eldest son that he must see about getting a male nurse, as Foote, his faithful manservant, was worn out after twelve hours of attendance. He was full of consideration and gratitude, and said how splendidly Foote had behaved.

Later, I spoke to Foote, who told me that the night had not been a very good one, but that Mr. Conrad now appeared better. It was as though a load had been taken off my heart. Not long after, his eldest son rushed in to fetch me. Everything was over.

At the actual moment of death nobody was in the room. Foote had gone out with a message, and Conrad was resting. There was no particular anxiety, for only half an hour previously his pulse had been taken by Mrs. Vinten, who was a trained nurse, and it was found to be normal. His devoted and heroic wife, lying powerless next door, heard a cry: "Here . . ." as if a second word had been stifled, and a fall. People ran in; he had slipped, dead, onto the floor from his chair. It was just eight-thirty o'clock.

He looked incredibly noble and splendid. All the ravage and pain had ebbed from his features, and deep aloofness and calm were written there. Yes, and a kind of haughty indifference, which brought out startlingly the classic grandeur of his face.



## HOW CONRAD CAME TO WRITE

BY RUTHERFORD H. PLATT, JR.

The story of Conrad the writer began—after years of Conrad the seaman—with “*Almayer’s Folly*.”

Go back to the occasion. You can picture the ship’s officer on the bridge of the *Vidar*, a vessel owned by Arabs of the Straits Settlements that poked in and out of the coves and rivers of Borneo, Celebes, Sumatra. His beard is thrust out as though to emphasize the decisive, fearless, onward-looking of his nature. He is master of every situation that the tides and breezes bring.

It is early morning. His ship has been moving slowly through the dim mists forty miles or so up a river to a rickety wharf. The forest looms dark and dank, the rigging drips. Then a figure emerges across a desolate patch of burnt ground. This apparition is clad in thin, flapping pajamas, a cotton singlet with short sleeves, and straw slippers. He comes close to the ship’s side and raises a weary countenance. “Good morning.” Conrad has met his Almayer!

That figure emerging from the jungle, from then on, haunted Conrad’s mind, consciously and subconsciously. It revolved there until it became the hidden, obscure necessity that drove him to write.

The change from sailor to writer did not occur suddenly or unresisted. Let us see the history of this phenomenon.

Years passed and oceans rolled between the exchange of greetings of the ship’s officer and the derelict white trader in the heart of Borneo, and its aftermath in a furnished room in the heart of London. It was 1889. Conrad had returned from an exceedingly stormy and perilous voyage from Australia and had taken lodgings in Bessborough Gardens. One morning after breakfast the captain pushed back his chair and rang the bell for the table to be cleared away. It was an unusual thing for him to do. According to routine he should have simply lighted his pipe and regarded the clearing of the table at the convenience of the landlady. But this time he rang the bell and said, “Won’t you please clear away all this at once?”



PROBABLY THE LAST PHOTOGRAPH OF  
CONRAD

It was taken in the summer of 1923, shortly after his visit to the United States. It shows him in the time of his fame and prosperity; and in the rôle which he latterly filled with such becoming grace, that of an English country gentleman

## HOW CONRAD CAME TO WRITE

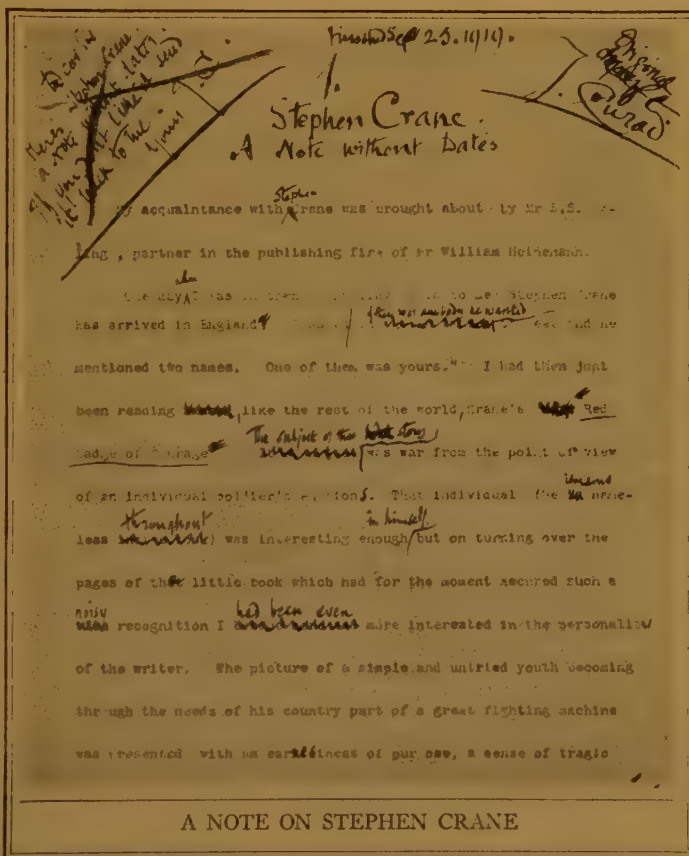
In that indolent interim he stood looking out the window; he saw an opaline mist, the kind that rises in the morning from a river—the river is near to Bessborough Gardens—and naturally his thoughts turned to another mist and to another river and a jungle. From that there emerged a figure that he recognized through and through—it was Almayer.

“Kaspar! Makan!’ The well-known shrill voice startled Almayer from his dream of splendid future into the unpleasant unrealities of the present hour.”

There you have the first words of "Almayer's Folly" set down in a moment of a sailor's idleness, if you will. A holiday pastime—perhaps. Until Conrad began to write that novel he had written nothing but letters, and only a few of those. He had never made a note of a fact or an impression or an anecdote in his life! That morning, when he sat down to write, he himself has said, "the conception of a planned book was entirely outside my mental range, the ambition of being an author had never turned up." But the die was cast.

What was the progress of the manuscript?

He did not abandon the sea—but neither did he abandon the manuscript. From that day on, wherever Conrad went, there went the manuscript. For four years, “like a cask of choice Madeira,” that story got carried to and fro. Chapter slowly followed chapter. The author went to the heart of Africa to pilot a river boat. At that time both Conrad and the manuscript escaped destruction by a hair’s breadth, when a canoe upset in the fierce rapids of the Congo. After the miracle of that rescue Conrad was so ill he returned to Europe. A chapter was completed while he managed a warehouse in London. Another was begun on the flyleaf of a Flaubert novel on a steamer frozen



## HOW CONRAD CAME TO WRITE

up at Rouen. The eighth chapter was born in a hospital in Geneva, where Conrad had gone for recuperation. Some time afterward Conrad shipped as chief officer on the clipper ship *Torrens*, bound for Australia. He stowed the manuscript in his locker. Jacques was a passenger on that voyage—the quiet, mysterious, understanding Jacques. Soon after this meeting he died, and it is not known to this day who Jacques actually was. Something uncommon in this passenger's nature tempted Conrad to confide in him. In his tactful, unpretentious, shy way he asked Jacques if it would bore him to read a manuscript "in a handwriting like mine." It was "a sort of tale," he explained.

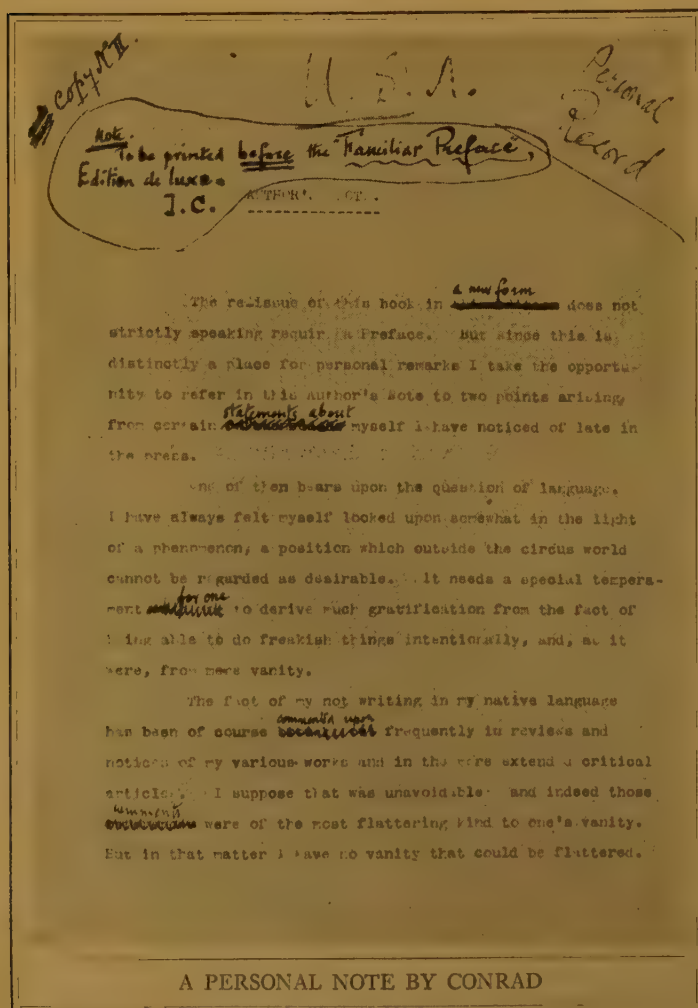
Conrad had found and won his first reader. When Jacques was asked if he thought the story worth finishing he replied, "Distinctly." That was all. It was decisive. It was enough.

After two voyages to Australia the manuscript was almost lost in the Friedrichstrasse Railway Station in Berlin. It was left in a portmanteau

and restored only in the nick of time by a watchful porter. Had the manuscript been lost it would probably have been the end of Conrad's writing, and only the dusty files of the Marine Department would ever have recorded the name of this man who came out of Poland.

On a May day in 1894 the last word of "Almayer's Folly" was written. In finishing it Conrad did not regard himself as committed to authorship. But there, nevertheless, was the manuscript. And, since it was there, something might as well be done with it. So it was sent off to a London publisher.

It arrived without



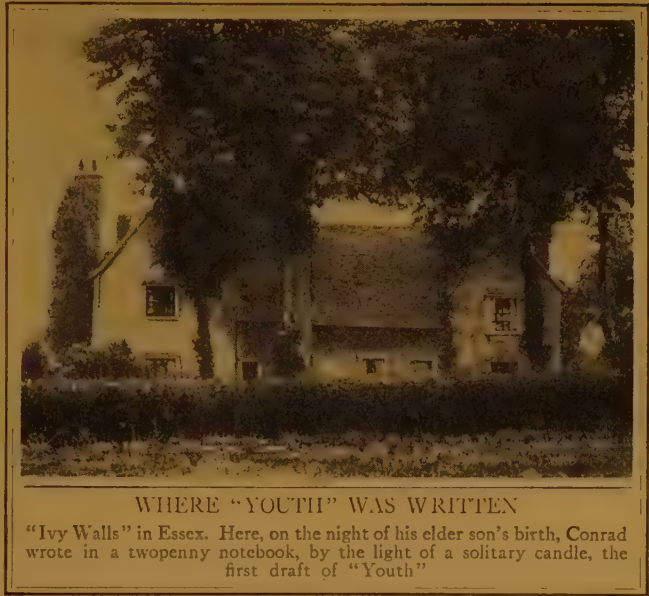
ceremony, pretense, or introduction. But some capable reader earned his or her salary the day that the glint of reality and charm was caught, and the manuscript passed on to Edward Garnett. To Mr. Garnett belongs the credit of the decision. He recommended it to T. Fisher Unwin, publisher, for inclusion in his Library of First Novels. A year later, May, 1895, "Almayer's Folly" appeared in its first edition.

Conrad was delighted and surprised. Even then he might not have started his second book, "An Outcast of the Islands," if the right word had not been spoken by Garnett. It happened when they were strolling together through the interminable streets of London—Conrad, beset with doubts, faced with new values, chaotically undecided. His companion, competently wise, suggested, "Why not write another?" Conrad has told us that if the suggestion had been "Why not become a writer?" or "Why not write books?" he might have been frightened off then and there. But "*another!*"—there was no eternal commitment in that. So he agreed.

It was a long and toilsome road. Success measured by popularity and profits was absent. A small band of followers—the able successors of Jacques—kept the author's eyes on the far horizon; that was all. The while, Conrad wrestled with his soul. Book followed book, line by line, not page by page.

In 1900 Conrad's future was as uncertain as the new century. In that year an English publisher and an American publisher staked the retired, obscure sea rover to his bread and butter while he created "The Rescue."

Suddenly the new story stopped short in its tracks. Conrad had got the characters into their situations and he could not get them out. For twenty years they stuck there. Then one day the American publisher received a letter from his friend. It said in essence: "I have it!" So in 1920 "The Rescue" was published—the book that was half written in the author's obscurity. Now it followed and surpassed the popular stir that had occurred when "Chance" came along in 1913. That was the first book of Conrad's that really *sold*. Why? No one can say; least of all the critics—with "Lord Jim" and "Nostromo" and "Youth" looming up back there in the dark days of indifference. And so—Conrad came to write.





# WORD ❖ ❖ ABOUT ❖ ❖ JOSEPH ❖ ❖ CONRAD ❖

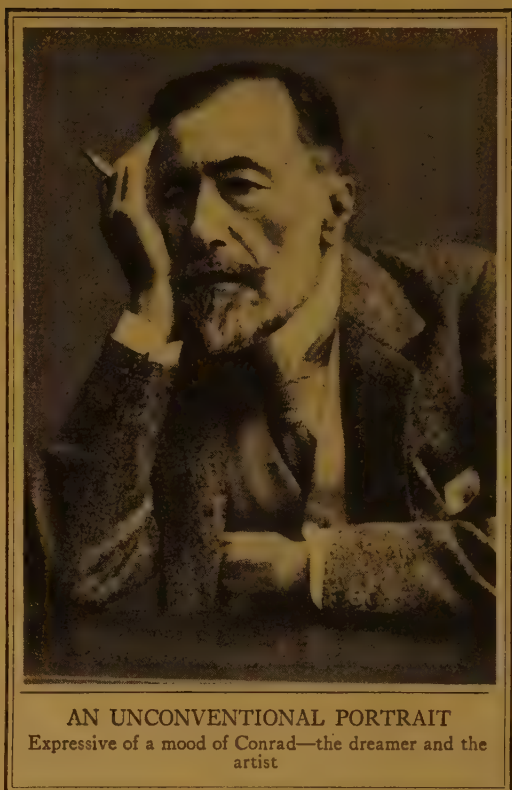
BY CHRISTOPHER MORLEY

The editor of *The Mentor* has asked me to write about *Conrad's Place in Literature*. It would be more in the current of my thought to hazard a few private notions about *Literature's Place in Conrad*—a silly juggle of words, you will think, but not without suggestion. For literature played only a partial rôle in Conrad's strange career, and his real greatness has sometimes been diluted by those who are too anxious to apply labels.

I saw the other day an autographed copy of "Chance," in which Conrad had written that he felt a peculiar sense of gratitude to that book since it was the first of his works (it was published in 1913) that broke through to a wider public. It gave him the great relief of knowing (so he wrote in his inscription) that he would not be merely a writer for a limited coterie. It warranted his private conviction that the great secret emotions of mankind are the common possession of all men and women.

This little confession seemed to me of considerable significance; just as was Conrad's remark, when he first landed in this country and was asked some literary questions by reporters, that he was not a man of letters and did not have (so he said in perfect sincerity) sufficient general culture to be a "literary critic." And I think he was probably right in what he said: certainly he was not a critic of literature like Anatole France, whom he so admired. The wisdom with which his memory was packed was wisdom of a more elemental sort. One cannot imagine him writing (as France once did so brilliantly) a weekly critique on books for a great newspaper. It was the things that lie behind literature that interested him: the hopes and terrors and wearinesses which all human beings know. Not at random did he set on the title page of one of his books the quotation from a fairy tale, "Something human is dearer to me than all the wealth of all the world."

So it struck me, after Conrad's death, that there was a gruesome fatuity in many of the eloquent remarks uttered by professional critics. Those who

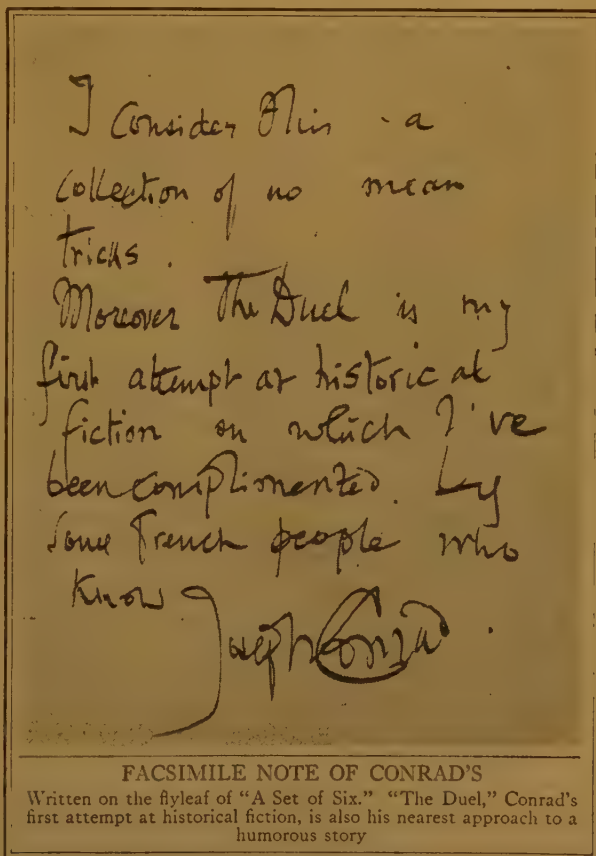


## A WORD ABOUT JOSEPH CONRAD

always referred to him, for instance, as a writer of the sea; a label that he himself grew to detest. For the sea was merely a dark curtain against which he hung many of his amazing pictures of human passions and fidelities. It was, in a way, merely accidental. It was his particular trick of perspective. The Deity Himself (one may imagine) might be annoyed if He were always referred to as the Creator of Earth. He created many other things too.

The greatest injustice that could be done to Conrad would be to perpetuate an impression that he was a writer of strange subtleties not readily savored by the average run of readers. It is not so. I will not speak of the best known of his stories, such as "Youth" or "Typhoon" or "Heart of Darkness"—stories of adventure in which the men who have known strange hardship find the very smell and color of their own bitter experience. I will mention only two tales of which one hears less. Turn to such stories as "The Shadow Line" or "The Secret Sharer": in them you will find that he has dealt in such sober simplicity that no one but a professional literary critic could miss the meaning, with those strange troubles of the spirit that happen as often in any business office as on the decks of ships where the action happens to be laid. Not Orison Swett Marden or the fabled Pelman himself has more directly stated the bitterness of man's battle with his own flabby will than that astonishing story "The Secret Sharer," where the captain of the ship finally comes to believe that the fugitive who has come aboard by night represents a kind of incarnation of his own weaknesses. Or take the character Ransome, in "The Shadow Line," the man always aware of the secret enemy he carried in his own courageous breast (his diseased heart)—I don't think there is any reader (worth reading anything) who can miss the truth that this man is a parable of us all.

If you had to label Conrad as anything certainly it would not be as a "writer of the sea" or an ironist or a philosophical novelist or any other of the tickets that literary clubs relish. There is only one



## A WORD ABOUT JOSEPH CONRAD



EPSTEIN'S BUST OF CONRAD

Just completed by the American sculptor Jacob Epstein. Muirhead Bone, the etcher, says, "It is not the slightly dandified French-ambassador-looking Conrad which some people would like, but a really noble and pathetic thing, a deeply interesting reading of a man"

word great enough for him, the word *poet*, which simply means *creator*. He had, as highly as any man of our time perhaps, the genuinely poetic mind which dreams about its experience in life and, by its magic faculty of seeing secret resemblances and analogies, builds a fable which mirrors ourselves. Creators are those who possess in themselves some recognizable taint of divinity; and, as always happens, that part of them which is god-like tortures and troubles that part of them which is merely man. The great sculptor Epstein has done a bust of Conrad which has startled some of those who loved him because they do not find it "like the Conrad they knew." It isn't: it is great sculpture because it is like the Conrad they didn't know, that prob-

ably no one knew: the secret and fierce and imagination-wracked soul of the great poet—with an enemy in his breast.



One could go on indefinitely, for the contemplation of great men leads to the contemplation of the universe—which they justify. One could argue with those who have said so much more than was necessary about Conrad as a master of English. Even that is not quite so; could not be so, in the nature of the case. His English was more consciously splendid than any native-born writer would dare to employ. It is not always quite grammatical; it is not always quite transparent. It is the thought, more than the words themselves, that is vital and durable in Conrad. And for that very reason he is so astonishingly valuable to the language he chose to honor. He reminds us that it is never merely literature that is important. It is the passion and trembling of human life, of which books cannot be more than a shadow.



Literature's place in Conrad, then, by no means takes up all the room. His life was amazing; three lives in one, really: as boy in Poland, as seaman, as writer. His life was heroic, and the quality of courage that was in it carried over to the end. I remember being told, by one who had visited him not long before his death, how Conrad wrote when crippled with gout. His right hand moved slowly over the paper, his left hand holding it supported at the wrist. It is well for all of us to think of that hand.

# THE CHARM OF OLD NEW ORLEANS

BY G. WILLIAM NOTT



Whitehall Studio, New Orleans

## COURTYARD OF THE ARTS AND CRAFTS

An interesting reminder of ante-bellum days is the mansion which now houses the Arts and Crafts Club. Here artists may exhibit their work, and in the event of a sale a small commission is charged. Ronald Hargrave, Alberta Kinsey, Ellsworth Woodward, George Castleden, and William Spratling are a few of the artists whose annual exhibitions are awaited by the Vieux Carré with keen interest.

# THE CHARM OF OLD NEW ORLEANS

**S**AUNTER through Rue Royale some balmy afternoon; there's an Old World atmosphere about the place suggestive of a colorful and romantic past.

Peer into one of the fern-banked courtyards; it is a scene from gay Seville that greets the eye. Then, as you stroll leisurely around Jackson Square, give free rein to your memory. Why, you are on the very spot where the *Sieur de Bienville* unfurled the banner of France on a pleasant morning of 1718! You are treading upon the old pavement of the *Vieux Carré*, the original plan of the city, a parallelogram eleven squares by five, laid out by *Sieur Le Blond de la Tour*, the royal engineer! Where nondescript dwellings now stand were the cypress cottages of the first settlers of New Orleans, surrounded by high picket fences and gardens. Indeed, in the earliest accounts of the city, mention of the gardens was always made.

The *Place d'Armes*, now Jackson Square, is the parade ground for the king's troops, and, in the nearby convent, somber-visaged Capuchins are wont to read their breviaries.

The first consignment of "correction girls" has landed in the colony, and among them, so tradition whispers, *Manon Lescaut*. Under the guidance of the Ursuline nuns the "casket girls" reach New Orleans. These are virtuous girls, whose trousseaux are carried in small trunks or "caskets," and who are to become the wives of the young aristocrats.

In the *Place d'Armes*, Louisiana is trans-

ferred to Spain, and shortly afterward the "Louisiana Martyrs" are put to death by order of the Spanish governor in 1769.

With the birth of the nineteenth century, Louisiana is once more a French colony.

What rejoicing on the part of the Creoles!

But fate has still another surprise for these loyal children of France. The Louisiana

Territory has been sold to the United States. For a time life in New Orleans flows on in unbroken tenor. Then *Jean Lafitte* and the *Barataria* pirates make their entry upon the scene. The *Vieux Carré* is in throes of excitement. Bloodcurdling tales are heard on all sides! By the ignorant, *Jean Lafitte* is even vested with supernatural powers, so miraculous are his escapes. The federal government is about to interfere with the lawless career of *Lafitte*, when word is brought of the *Battle of New Orleans*. And *Lafitte*? Why, he has taken part in the battle and been granted full pardon!

Barely five years elapse before Rue Royale is

again keyed to the highest pitch of anticipation. Napoleon is to be rescued from *St. Helena*! It is the one topic of the coffee houses.

"*En avant* to the rescue of the *Little Corporal*!" the young Creoles exclaim. "We will build a house worthy of the great man," say the prosperous citizens gathered at *Maspero's Exchange* to discuss the plans. But ere the swift clipper *Seraphine* has sailed word is received that the Emperor has



Whitwell Studio, New Orleans

## OLD SOUTHERN DARKY

One of the few survivors of a fast-vanishing epoch. To the old darky of this type, love of master is a strong characteristic, and he feels not so much bound to serve his "white folks" as *privileged* to do so. Simple, kindly, humble, the memory of him and his class will endure as long as gratitude and charity remain in the human heart



Whitewell Studio, New Orleans

### OLD CREOLE COTTAGE

The refugees from the slave insurrections in the French West Indies who reached New Orleans before the first years of the nineteenth century soon made their influence felt in the colony. In the construction of their houses they adopted the manner in use in their country—that is, brick cottages level with the street and flanked on one side by a high, walled-in garden

died. However, to this day, the house that was to have given shelter to Napoleon is pointed out with pride by the Creole element of New Orleans. . . .

In every chronicle of the New Orleans of yesteryear one name stands out: Bernard de Marigny. The hero *par excellence* of social tradition! Bernard de Marigny, whose father was host to Louis Philippe! Who lost a fortune playing bagatelle, then named a street after this game! Who, at the marriage of Baron de Pontalba and Micaela Almonaster, represented Marshal Ney.

Bernard de Marigny, the last of the Creole landed aristocracy. Duelist, gallant, raconteur, inimitable wit; the Beau Brummell of his day!

Typical of the Spanish grandee was Don Andres Almonaster, who built the St. Louis Cathedral and the Charity Hospital, besides making numerous other donations to the city of his adoption.

He lies buried in the old cathedral, where a marble tablet preserves his memory and

reminds the pious to say a prayer for his soul.

No less intimately connected with the history of the cathedral was Père Antoine. Good Père Antoine, as he is affectionately remembered, whose life story reads like a tale of the Middle Ages, without whose presence no marriage or baptism seemed complete. He has come down to us in countless legends; the Good Samaritan of the Vieux Carré.

And Angelo, the beadle of the cathedral, who, when the ultra-pious forgot their contribution, would awaken them from their reverie by a gentle tap on the shoulder.

In this very cathedral is to be found the baptismal certificate of Marie Laveau, who as the queen of the Voodooos struck terror into the heart of black and white alike. Combining religion with diabolism, she worked upon the credulity of her race, and woe to the unfortunate Negro on whom she made a "gris gris"! Only those darkies who were steadfast in their religion, usually Catholic, might hope to escape the "spells" of Marie

Laveau. To this class belongs Tante Clementine, the praline vender of Rue Chartres. Jovial old Tante Clementine in her madras "tignon," who hovers over her basket of pralines, watchful of little black urchins who from time to time try to slip their hands into her basket. . . .

Up to a few years ago, St. John's Eve in New Orleans was the date set aside by the Voodooes for holding their weird rites. Thousands of Negroes would flock to the lake shore in the dead of night, and by the light of glaring bonfires take part in the savage orgies. On November 1st, when the tombs are decorated with gayly colored flowers, the Negro population is again in evidence. The older cemeteries are fairly teeming with them, and to the Negro mind this is not so much a day for remembering the dead as for renewing old acquaintances among the living. Ginger cakes, pralines, sandwiches, "Creole beer" are in brisk demand, much to the delight of the venders.

The inhabitant of the Vieux Carré was frequently wakened at early morn by the quaint cries of the venders. And what a strange medley! "*Calas tout chauds,*" "*Belles calas,*" sang the rice-cake woman.

"I want to sweep them chimneys," cried out the ebony-colored chimney sweep as he sauntered by in his high silk hat and dress coat. "Clothes poles, fine clothes poles," chanted an old Negro bending under a load of neatly trimmed saplings.

"Bay leaf, bay leaf, Madame," echoed a drawing Negro voice, while the shrill cry of "Blackberries, blackberries," completed this morning symphony.

Who among the residents of the Vieux Carré can ever forget the "charivaris" of the

last century? If by chance a marriage ceremony was performed which did not meet with the approval of the community the Creoles would exclaim: "Now for a charivari!" Forthwith a procession would form, and, making all manner of din, beating on kettles and blowing whistles, precede the unfortunate couple to the church.

In 1827 some young Creole gentlemen returning from their studies in Paris decided to form a street procession of masqueraders, in imitation of the carnival celebrations in southern Europe. The Creole population greeted the first procession with enthusiasm, and rumor has it that Bernard de Marigny, then in the heyday of his glory, was in a large measure responsible for its success. Through Rue Royale the gay throng of maskers made its way, while from the grille balconies young Creole belles showered roses on the merrymakers.

Some years later a more lavish program was arranged, and the ball at the Theatre d'Orleans was long remembered for its gorgeous settings and the beauty and elegance of the guests. However, Mardi Gras, as it is observed to-day, was unknown until the year 1857, when the Mistick Krewe of

Comus gave its first procession on movable floats: "The Demon Actors in Milton's Paradise Lost." . . .

The early French settlers in Louisiana—that is, the aristocrats—were Parisian at heart. To them, music and the fine arts were the necessary complements of life.

To this class belonged the Marquise de Vaudreuil, wife of the French governor of Louisiana. In her home, situated in the Vieux Carré, was enacted the first drama ever written in New Orleans. The seed thus



THE PRALINE VENDER

New Orleans of yesterday came to the praline vender for its sweetmeats. This familiar institution of old New Orleans is gradually disappearing



Harold A. Frederick, New Orleans

### THE CABILDO

Erected in 1795 by Don Andres Almonaster and presented to the city. In the Sala Capitular on the second floor, Louisiana was transferred by Spain to France and then to the United States. Here General Lafayette was entertained in 1825 upon his memorable visit to New Orleans

sown flowered and in later years bore fruit.

In 1791 a company of French comedians played in New Orleans, but not until fifteen years later was a permanent theatre built. This was the Theatre St. Philippe, seating merely seven hundred, but withal the rendez-vous of Creole pleasure seekers. It is at the Theatre d'Orleans, erected in 1817, that the drama and opera flourished. What delightful tales of a gala night at the Orleans could the grandmothers of a past century relate! And what a charming tableau, these vivacious Creole belles, their dark eyes flashing approval of the play, flirting over their fans while the tactful chaperons seemed more deeply absorbed in the opera than ever!

Meyerbeer, Halevy, Gluck, Rossini; these were the composers preferred by the habitués of the Theatre d'Orleans. With the old French Opera House, completed in 1859, will ever be associated that exquisite daughter of the Muses, Adelina Patti. Here she made her New Orleans début in "Le Pardon de Ploermel." What memories does her name evoke!

Before her little house in Rue Royale the young gallants would stand by the hour, if only to listen to one of those silver notes.

However, Patti was but one of the many stellar artists to appear on the boards of the old French Opera. To this day the former habitués take pleasure in relating how a certain tenor would be called upon to repeat a difficult aria from "The Huguenots" two, three, and even four times. Caruso . . . ? "Why, *mon cher*, Caruso was not in the same class with this tenor," the loyal Creoles will tell you with pride.

In 1848 a young newspaper man from the North arrived in New Orleans, having been previously offered a position on "The Crescent." The quaintness of the city made a strong appeal to him, and in a series of weekly sketches he gave his impressions. Though unsigned, these articles have since been identified as coming from the pen of Walt Whitman.

His biographers also assure us that while in New Orleans he had an affair of the heart, presumably with some Creole lady.

To Lafcadio Hearn the Vieux Carré was often a source of inspiration, as many of his early sketches bear witness.

With the arrival of George W. Cable, Rue Royale became a land of enchantment,



Whitesell Studio, New Orleans

#### HOME PREPARED FOR NAPOLEON I

This very house was prepared for the reception of the "Little Corporal" when the good clip per *Seraphine* was to rescue the Emperor from St. Helena and carry him to New Orleans

whence he explored innumerable by-ways, some real, some imaginary, but ever depicting a scene of rare charm and beauty. Madame Delphine, Sieur George, Tite Poul-ette! What romance does each name suggest! And Madame John's Legacy, one of the oldest houses in the city, which, in the words of Mr. Cable, "has become a den of Italians who sell fuel by daylight, and by night are up to no telling what extent of deviltry."

These old places still linger in or near Rue Royale, defying time and progress alike.

In her first stories, Miss Grace King has given us several delightful pictures of life in the Vieux Carré, though her talent is such as to require a broader canvas.

O. Henry during his brief sojourn in the city was attracted by the quaint old streets and houses, and the curious types. It was while in New Orleans that he happened upon the pen name, "O. Henry." . . .

Shortly after New York surrendered to the charm of Greenwich Village, New Orleans, not to be outdone in things artistic and historical, rediscovered, so to say, the Vieux Carré.

Houses that had been in a state of desuetude for half a century opened their battered shutters, and abandoned courtyards once more put forth gayly colored blossoms.

In the old Pontalba Buildings flanking Jackson Square there was an air of activity quite unknown to the neighborhood.

The home of Paul Morphy, the "chess king," became the "Patio Royal," where elite New Orleans sips its tea in the afternoon and dances to the latest jazz after nightfall.

The tiny two-story house where Adelina Patti lived is now the "Green-Shutter Book Store," a resort for young intellectuals. And Rue Royale is a labyrinth of antique shops, where shabby gentility exchanges its heirlooms for a mess of pottage. . . .

But withal, Old New Orleans holds religiously to its traditions. You are strolling through an antiquated neighborhood, when you suddenly pause before a dilapidated board fence. You are attracted by the odor of orange flowers. Glancing over your shoulder, you see the white blossoms glistening in the moonlight. Peering into the silvery garden, you behold a mass of night jasmine. A veritable ghost garden! You can almost see a maiden in crinoline, under the rose arbor.

Perhaps she is waiting for her lover. He has been delayed, and she is plucking nervously at her lace handkerchief! . . .

It is in scenes such as these that old New Orleans weaves a subtle spell about you!



Whitesell Studio, New Orleans

#### PATIO ROYAL, FORMER HOME OF PAUL MORPHY

Erected for the Louisiana Bank Company, this building later became the home of Paul Morphy, the chess wizard. At the age of thirteen, Morphy had defeated some of the finest players of Europe and America, and while still in his early twenties was recognized as the greatest chess player of the age—if not the greatest in the history of the world



Whitesell Studio, New Orleans

#### COURT OF THE MORPHY HOUSE

In these delightful surroundings, reminiscent of the days when Rue Royale was the center of elegance, elite New Orleans sips tea and dances to the strains of the latest jazz. Known as the Patio Royal, the building has been thoroughly renovated, preserving withal the atmosphere of olden times



Whitcomb Studio, New Orleans

#### VIEW OF ESPLANADE AVENUE SHOWING HAND-WROUGHT BALCONIES

To the Creole of the last century Esplanade Avenue was the height of elegance and refinement. And somehow traditions seem to cling to the old avenue which not even the hand of progress can efface. Like an old aristocrat, Esplanade Avenue shows vestiges of better times



Moses Studio, New Orleans

### IN A GARDEN OF YESTERYEAR

Recalling the time when mademoiselle wore crinolines and when her days were spent within the family walls. In the seclusion of the courtyard the ladies enjoyed their ices on balmy afternoons and gossiped to their hearts' content



JACKSON SQUARE AND THE PONTALBA BUILDINGS

Whitehall Studio, New Orleans

Formerly the Place d'Armes, it was this spot that Bienville selected as a parade ground for the king's troops. Here were held the ceremonies marking the transfer of Louisiana from Spain to France and then to the United States. The Pontalba Buildings, erected in 1849, were the first apartment houses in New Orleans



Whiteoell Studio, New Orleans

#### LITTLE EXCHANGE ALLEY, NEAR ST. LOUIS CATHEDRAL

Typical of the time when New Orleans was under the Spanish régime, when from a near-by roof top the watchman called the hours of the night. Perhaps through this very alley Jean Lafitte, the pirate, prowled during his nightly rambles in the Vieux Carré



Whitcomb Studio, New Orleans

### THE CABILDO, FACING JACKSON SQUARE

Tradition tells us that, in a cell facing the Cabildo courtyard, one of the Lafitte brothers was imprisoned for piracy. The old building now houses part of the Louisiana State Museum, where, among other interesting relics, is the death mask of Napoleon I, presented to the city by Doctor Antommarchi, the Emperor's physician at St. Helena



Whitcomb Studio, New Orleans

### ENTRANCE TO THE LITTLE THEATRE

Close by the cathedral is the "Petit Théâtre du Vieux Carré," in which the spirit of the past has been embodied with rare charm. Nowhere has the "little theatre movement" met with greater success than in New Orleans, as has been proved by the high-class plays produced in this theatre



Whitcomb Studio, New Orleans

#### ENTRANCE TO SOPHIE NEWCOMB COLLEGE FOR WOMEN

The Newcomb College for Women was opened in 1887 as a department of the Tulane University. Formerly occupying a group of buildings in Washington Avenue, the college moved some years ago to the present site adjoining the Tulane University



Harold A. Frederick. New Orleans

### COURT OF THE LIONS

"There it was (The House of the Lions), with its solid green gates between the lions, its golden walls with the fringe of peeping magnolias, with its green latticed gallery."—Winston Churchill in "The Crossing"



Harold A. Frederick, New Orleans

### STAIRWAY OF SAXON HOME

Typical of the aristocratic houses of Rue Royale is the home of Lyle Saxon, one of the most charming chroniclers of the life in the Vieux Carré. Sherwood Anderson, Lord Dunsany, and a host of literary celebrities have been entertained here by Mr. Saxon



Whitecell Studio, New Orleans

### OLD SAINT LOUIS CATHEDRAL

Facing the Mississippi River and overlooking Jackson Square, the present cathedral, flanked by the Cabildo and the Presbytery, stands on the exact spot laid out by Bienville for the parish church. After the Battle of New Orleans, General Jackson attended mass at the St. Louis Cathedral, celebrating the victory on the Battlefield of Chalmette

# GEORGE W. CABLE'S NEW ORLEANS

ACTUAL SCENES IDENTIFIED WITH THE AUTHOR'S "OLD CREOLE DAYS"



Whitehall Studio, New Orleans

## "SIEUR GEORGE'S"

It was in this interesting building—the first four-story edifice in New Orleans—that "Sieur George" rented a room, intending to stay fifty days, and remaining fifty years. "It stands about the corner of two ancient streets," writes Mr. Cable, "like a faded fop who pretends to be looking for employment"



Whitcomb Studio, New Orleans

### "CAFÉ DES REFUGIÉS"

What romance does the name recall! It is here that fugitives from the slave insurrections in the West Indies gathered in the evening to sip their ices and relate their divers experiences. Filibusters, revolutionists, and, so tradition whispers, even pirates made of this café a popular rendezvous



Whitcomb Studio, New Orleans

### "MADAME JOHN'S LEGACY"

When New Orleans was fairly young, this quaint building was erected. At one time it was the old Spanish jail, but later, to quote Mr. Cable, "this was the home of a gay gentleman, whose first name happened to be John." He had formed a liaison with a quadroon woman, who became known as "Madame John." To her he bequeathed the house at his death



Whitesell Studio, New Orleans

### "KRISTIAN KOPPIG'S HOUSE"

In George Cable's story, "Tite Poulette," mention is made of one Kristian Koppig, who became enamored of the beautiful quadroon girl. In this tiny cottage the good Dutchman is supposed to have lived, and it is perhaps here that he brought his bride, when he learned of her Spanish, and not colored, parentage



Whitesell Studio, New Orleans

### THE HAUNTED HOUSE

Here lived Madame Lalaurie, who practiced such cruelty toward her slaves that in the year 1834 a mob set fire to her house and she barely escaped with her life. Since that time, popular superstition has made this house the meeting-place of the ghosts of the Vieux Carré



Whiteoell Studio, New Orleans

### "TITE POULETTE'S DWELLING"

On the corner of Royal and Dumaine streets is a handsome three-story structure, once the home of John R. Grymes, the lawyer who defended Jean Lafitte, the pirate of Baratavia. Here "Tite Poulette" and her mother, the quadroon Zali, moved after the failure of the bank, according to Mr. Cable

# THE TROUBLED CAREER OF LAFCADIO HEARN

BY ALLEN NEVINS

**N**OT since Edgar Allan Poe has American literature produced an author whose life was so wayward, morbid, sensitive, and full of suffering, and who amid stormy experiences devoted himself so intensely to the pursuit of artistic aims as Lafcadio Hearn.

Even more than Poe, Hearn had an unfortunate and wretched boyhood, for he never possessed the opportunities that Poe

threw away. His ancestry was mixed, his parents were irresponsible, and he was early left to shift for himself. He was born in the Ionian Islands off the coast of Greece, where his father, a surgeon major attached to the British army of occupation, had married a beautiful Greek girl. The ill-mated parents soon separated, both remarried, and the boy Lafcadio was given to a Welsh grandaunt to rear. Here he fell under such a bigoted religious tutelage that he suffered intensely, and long years afterward could not refrain from flinging a bitter reproach at one of his narrow female guardians: "Woe, woe! Thou

didst destroy it, the beautiful world!" At Ushaw, the Roman Catholic College at Durham, England, a crowning misfortune fell upon him. While playing, he was accidentally blinded in one eye. Simultaneously he became estranged from his grandaunt, and, sick, half-blind, suspicious, and deeply sensitive to his disfigurement, he was thrown on his own resources at the age of sixteen.

For a time he picked up a living as a servant in London, and became familiar with the worst sights and sounds of the city slums. But three years later, in 1869, the lad somehow made his way to New York. Here his sufferings were even greater. Emaciated, shabby, unkempt, for two years he lived on the verge of starvation. During

much of that period he slept on the shavings of a carpenter's shop and cooked his rude meals on its little stove, paying the owner by running errands. Finally he reached Cincinnati on an emigrant train and, after a further round of hunger, loneliness, and rebuffs, found his first steady employment as a reporter. He was too undersized, weak, and shortsighted for most employments, but he could wield a pen.

He had to labor fourteen hours a day to earn at most twenty dollars a week, and found little encouragement or scope for his really brilliant powers. There was nothing better to do than to write murder reports, and he made a local reputation by his account of one ghastly homicide. Despite his shyness, eccentricity, and bursts of temper, he cultivated a friendship with other young men of ability, notably H. E. Krehbiel, later the famous music critic. After his long work was done he often was to be seen under a gas jet, his one distorted eye glued to a bit of French litera-

ture, his short body bent over a piece of paper as he patiently labored at a translation. It was not strange that he fell into some evil ways. His intense temperament, denied its proper expression, turned to morbid subjects, while the inexperienced and passionate youth, cut off from a normal social life, was sure to find unhealthy associates. To this unhappy period belonged his entanglement with the Negress Althea Foley, who later claimed to be his wife.

Several years of equally bitter hardship and penury followed his removal to New Orleans in 1877, for the warm Southland irresistibly attracted him. There were times when this half-blind writer, only a little more than five feet tall, dressed in cheap and



LAFCADIO HEARN

From a photograph taken by Gutekunst, in 1889, when Hearn was living in Philadelphia with his friend Dr. Gould



Whitesell Studio, New Orleans

#### HEARN'S FIRST LODGINGS IN NEW ORLEANS

This is the first house in which Lafcadio Hearn lived after his arrival in New Orleans, November, 1877. He paid his landlady the meager amount that he had left over from his trip from Cincinnati, so as to insure a week or two's lodging in the city

clumsy garments, erratic and utterly guileless in all worldly matters, was dependent on charity; once or twice he even contemplated suicide. But eventually, in 1881, he found his niche on the "Times-Democrat," whose editors were peculiarly fitted to value his talents. He had from the first yielded to the charm of New Orleans—its beautiful old French buildings, its artistic nooks, its warm indolence, its quaint customs. He was an ardent worshiper of such beauty as it offered. Now it became clear how fortunate he was to have drifted to this ancient seat of Louisiana culture.

Here he found an appreciative audience such as no other city in America could offer for his special genius. He had developed a passion for the most elegant, subtle, and

jeweled French styl-ists—for Gautier, Baudelaire, Flaubert, and the De Goncourt brothers. He had become an expert student of those branches of literature and life which most appeal to sensuous and artistic Latin temperaments. In New Orleans, with its large French population, much of it cultivated, leisurely, and beauty-loving, he could write upon the topics he most liked, and be sure of responsive readers. His weekly articles upon the most brilliant stars of the French literary firmament, accompanied by exquisitely finished translations of bits of their prose, were received with enthusiasm. So, too, were his bits of research into odd subjects—Oriental dances and songs, African music, historic lovers, and so on. He even displayed a knack for illustrating his contributions. But, no matter how heavy

the demands upon him, he never failed to give painstaking attention to the refinement of his style. He enameled and polished each paragraph with meticulous care. Over each essay the nearsighted word-jeweler toiled like a lapidary over his precious gems.

Writings so exotic and bizarre in content, so gleaming and richly colored in manner, were certain to lift Hearn to a larger sphere. In New Orleans he quickly found a friend in George W. Cable, a young clerk who had won fame as a short-story writer, and who took steps to introduce him to Northern magazines. The half-blind, neurasthenic outcast blossomed into literature. Before long he was restlessly visiting New York and was being greeted as a new author of promise by men like Charles Dudley Warner and

William Dean Howells. The "Atlantic" and "Harper's" accepted articles by him, and the latter published a serial story of some length, called "Chita." Its success was such that Hearn felt able, with several hundred dollars saved, to realize his old ambition of penetrating farther into the tropics, and, in 1887, he made a tour of the Windward Islands, writing delightful travel sketches. Pursued still by money troubles and estranged from his friends—for his irrepressible tendency to quarrel led to ruptures with Krehbiel, Cable, and other old associates—he arranged with Harper and Brothers in 1889 to go to Japan and write articles upon Japanese scenes and life.

It was the happiest stroke of luck that sent him to Japan. The elfin charm of the country, the simplicity and grace of the people, captivated him at once. Above all, he became an intermediary between East and West at a crucial moment. When he went to Japan the nation was as primitive as the Etruscan tribes before the founding of Rome, yet within a generation it became a mighty modern power. His twelve painstaking volumes upon Japan furnish our finest picture of that country before its swift transition.

For a time Hearn found entire happiness in his life. He loved the picturesqueness of Japan—the little houses under blue roofs, the shop fronts hung with blue, the people as diminutive as himself, the soft clapping of thousands of hands that greeted the rising sun, the wife, whom he took almost at once. Living first in a house that cost only four dollars a month, he was temporarily freed from

the money anxieties that had always tormented him. He ate Japanese food with chopsticks, dressed in Japanese clothes, refused to teach his family English, and was delighted with the Japanese songs and folk tales. When his first child was born in 1893 his emotion was profound and the entire restless nature of the man seemed transformed. Yet his happiness could not endure, for his health was not good, and his irritable, suspicious temperament was certain to involve him again in difficulties. He first taught in a government college in Kunamoto, and then spent some years as a journalist in Kobe, where his very best writing was done. Then he became, in 1896, a teacher of English at Waseda University in Tokio, a post of high honor.



Whitcomb Studio, New Orleans

#### HEARN LIVED ON THE SECOND FLOOR OF THIS DWELLING

In this house, in a shabby quarter of the city of New Orleans, Hearn occupied the two corner rooms on the second floor, opening on a gallery framed in ironwork. He took his meals near by at the boarding house of Mrs. Courtney, who mothered him and to whom he always remained deeply grateful.



Whitesell Studio, New Orleans

#### HEARN'S LODGINGS OPPOSITE THE OPERA HOUSE

The charm of the Vieux Carré soon appealed to Lafcadio Hearn, and he took a room in this old house almost facing the French Opera House. At that time the garden to the side put forth its blooms with far more prodigality than it does to-day

During the six years that he held this professorship his old eccentricities still marked him, though changed and softened. He shunned social intercourse, and devoted himself more and more to his art. "You know my noblest enjoyment is thinking and writing," he used to say to his wife. "When I have things to write upon I am happy. I forget all cares and anxieties." Living in Japanese style in a lonely part of town, he never mingled with Europeans when he could avoid it. Part of his distaste for society was attributable to his anxiety to con-

serve his time, for he knew his years were numbered and he was eager to leave a competence for his family. So little was he seen outside his home and classroom that legends began to spring up regarding him. He made enemies too, and they intrigued to deprive him of his university position. Becoming aware of this, he resigned his place. Two years later, toiling with his pen to the last, and leaving one of his ablest books, "Japan: An Interpretation," just finished in manuscript, he died, and was buried in Tokio according to the Buddhist rites.



# HITMAN \* \* \* COLLECTIONS \* \* \* BY HOWARD WILLARD COOK

Collectors with a sense of "future values" in rare editions and original manuscripts have been for some years and are to-day eagerly following the path of Whitmania. The result is that several American collectors have acquired items of Whitmania of great interest and value.

With the death of Horace Traubel a few years ago, what was said to be the largest collection of Whitman treasures was distributed.

Mr. Traubel was for years one of Walt Whitman's enthusiastic admirers and friends, and was appointed literary executor upon the poet's passing.

Upon the death of Mr. Traubel, Mr. Frederick P. Hier, Jr., acquired from the Traubel estate some of its most valuable

Whitman manuscripts and published works.

Mr. Hier's collection of over three hundred items includes original drafts of poems written and rewritten by Whitman, proof sheets, letters, photographs, and comments—all relative to his life and writings, and chiefly to his "Leaves of Grass." The thirteen authentic editions of "Leaves of Grass" are a part of Mr. Hier's collection. With a later issue of the seventh edition, these are pictured on this page. This shelf of books embodies one of the most hectic publishing experiences in literary history. Authors have at times encountered difficulties with their publishers, but the worst-told tale is tame compared with the vicissitudes of "Leaves of Grass." Temperamentally or financially there were troubles a-plenty between Whitman and his publishers, but the poet worked on, endeavoring to leave complete upon his death a book of poems that would express

the thought and labor of a lifetime. It was on the second edition (1856), termed by Whitman "a pocket edition," that there appeared upon the book's backbone, in gilt lettering, the following:

"I greet you at the beginning of a great career.  
R. W. Emerson."

The late J. P. Morgan and his librarian, Miss Belle da Costa Greene, have enriched the Pierpont Morgan Library in New York with an excellent showing of Whitmania. Here are preserved about forty autographed letters from Walt Whitman to his mother, to Mrs. Abbey Price, Mrs. Anne Gilchrist (an English admirer of his work, who was largely

responsible for Whitman's recognition by the European writers of his time), and others. The letters date from 1860 to 1885. With this collection are twenty-two pages of Whitman's diary kept during the Civil War, two leaves of his essay on American poets, two

pages of "Ethiopia Saluting the Colors," and what many term the gem of the lot, one page of the original draft of Whitman's "Ode to Washington."

In the private library of Thomas L. Raymond of Newark, N. J., are precious drafts and proofs, and volumes autographed by Whitman. One inscribed "For my friend Dr. R. M. Bucke" is dated, "Camden, N. J., May 26th, 1880." This particular piece of Whitmania brought at sale close to five hundred dollars.

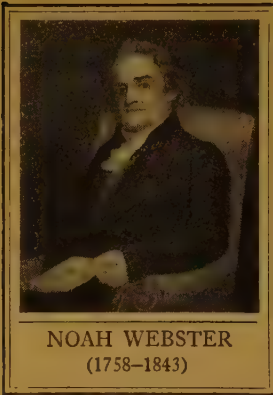
The valuation of Whitman items is a high one in dollars and cents. Their "market price" ranges well up with prices brought by the letters and original scripts of many writers who are more popular. It is gratifying to those of us who love Whitman to know that collectors are preserving these intimate recollections of his life and work, and that they gain in value as time goes on.



Courtesy the owner, Mr. F. P. Hier, Jr.

## AUTHENTIC EDITIONS OF "LEAVES OF GRASS"

Thirteen in all, with a later issue of the seventh edition



## NOAH WEBSTER

*His name is on the title  
page of millions of books*

BY GEORGE S. BRYAN

Just three weeks before Daniel Webster delivered his Bunker Hill address another Webster died whose name was no less

a household word among his countrymen. No other American of the time had written upon so great a variety of subjects. Two books of widest national fame were his. Each had played an important part in the nation's social history.

One of the volumes was small enough to be slipped handily into a coat pocket. It had gone through one edition after another, until its binding of blue boards was as familiar to Americans as the cover of the household almanac or the lid of the family Bible. This was Noah Webster's "Speech." He published it when he was twenty-five, styling it "Part I" of "A Grammatical Institute of the English Language." At its author's death, in 1843, not far from 20,000,000 copies had been circulated. This, be it remembered, was in a country of which the population was 17,000,000. Annual sales of the spelling book rose to near the 1,000,000 mark. Shortly after the beginning of the present century the total distribution was estimated at some 75,000,000 copies. That establishes a record for "best sellers" by American authors.

"Webster's Spelling Book" became the authoritative textbook of the American common school. It was the standard to which judges in the old-time spelling bees appealed. The poet Fitz-Greene Halleck speaks of Connecticut preceptors "teaching the A B C from Webster's spelling book."

Webster described the speller as "an elementary book for facilitating the acquisition of our vernacular

tongue, and for correcting a vicious pronunciation which prevailed extensively among the common people of this country." To its influence was in large part due that nation-wide approach to uniformity in orthography and speech on which foreigners have often commented. We find that

Webster thought it necessary to warn students that *bayonet* was not to be made "bag-onet," that *cutlass* was not "cutlash," nor was a *vagabond* a "vagabone," or a *wainscot* a "winchott." These particular pronunciations yielded to his attack. Against some things, however, the gods themselves strive in vain; and despite Webster's taboo, dating back to 1783, we may in our own day hear "chimbly" for *chimney*, "cork" for *calk*, "guardeen" for *guardian*. Yet the old blue-bound speller must be reckoned a decisive force in arresting in the United States the early growth of marked provincial dialects, such as exist in Europe.

Through many years Webster was meditating a work of far greater compass and far more laborious research than the spelling book. He wished to compile a new dictionary of the English language, to take the place of Dr. Samuel Johnson's, which was woefully out of date and took no account of American developments. At last he was able to get at this dictionary-making; he considered it the paramount task of his life. His first published venture in this field was "A Com-



NOAH WEBSTER'S BIRTHPLACE  
At West Hartford, Connecticut, as it appears to-day

*Brachien n Fern.*

*Brachnet n [Br braquet, to bend; oriental 777] brach, Ar. ch. Heb.  
Syr. Sam. & Eth. to bend; hence it signifies the <sup>hump</sup>hump, hence to bless.  
from kneeling in reverence. In Arabic, the verb signifies also to  
pour forth rain; to rain violently; hence Eng. brook, a stream, from  
motion, extension. In Ar. also to be happy, to make prosperous; to praise,  
to hasten; to rush as upon an enemy; with derivative, increase, abundance.*

Courtesy the owners, G. & C. Merriam Co.

A PORTION OF WEBSTER'S ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT

From the first edition (1828) of "An American Dictionary of the English Language"

pendious Dictionary of the English Language." The "Compendious" appeared in 1806. It contained, so its title page stated, 5,000 words not to be found "in the best English compends," and it gave special attention to terms that had been introduced by progress in the physical sciences. In the following year Webster started on "An American Dictionary of the English Language."

Johnson had been subsidized by a group of English booksellers; Webster had no remuneration while his dictionary was in the making, and depended mainly on the income received from the speller, finding this sufficient for his needs, though his royalty was less than a cent a copy. Johnson had six assistants and completed his task in eight years; Webster, with but little aid, toiled for twenty years, and devoted to his etymologies alone more time than was occupied by Johnson's entire enterprise. Of Johnson's performance, Boswell declared that "... the world contemplated with wonder so stupendous [Boswell's spelling] a work achieved by one man, while other countries had thought such undertakings fit only for whole academies." What, then, must be said of Webster?

The first edition of Webster's "American Dictionary" was in two volumes, containing 12,000 words and between 30,000 and 40,000 definitions not in any preceding work. It came out in 1828. Webster thought that "the genuine English idiom" was as well preserved by "the unmixed English of this country" as by the best English writers. Accordingly, in citing authorities, it was, he said, "with pride and satisfaction" that side by side with Milton, Addison, Dryden, Cowper, and Thomson he placed Washington, Adams, Jay, Madison, Marshall, Franklin, Hamilton, Trumbull, and Irving. He also thought that America had as full a right as Great Britain to coin new English words.

Hence, he included in his list *land-office*, *selectman*, *prairie*, *savings-bank*, and many other terms that he originated here; and in the same spirit he gave the new meanings that had been developed here for such words as *plantation*, *justice*, *marshal*, *location*, *congress*, and *senate*.

He made certain modifications in spellings—intended to do away, so far as possible, with what he regarded as encumbrances, irregularities, and exceptions. These modifications, after some opposition, gradually made their way into American usage; but when, in the interest of etymology, Webster essayed such alterations as that of *bridegroom* to "bridegoom" and that of *feather* to "fether" American objection was general. In his second edition (2 volumes, 1840-41) the accepted orthographies were restored to many of the words that had been altered; further restorations were subsequently made.

Though Webster died, his dictionary, like his spelling book, continued. Indeed, to most Americans, *Webster* for years meant "dictionary," very much as, in the earlier days of the English tongue, *donat* came to mean "a grammar," because the medieval grammar of Donatus had so long been almost the only text in use. From Webster's executors the brothers Merriam of Springfield, Massachusetts, bought the copyright for its unexpired ten years at the appraised value of \$3,000; and in 1847 the Merriams brought out a revision in the one-volume form now familiar. Webster found 2,500 copies sufficient to meet the American demand for his first edition; 3,000 copies proved to be enough for his second; but with the 1847 revision the sales advanced to a point that would have surprised him had he been living. From that time the history of the Webster dictionary belongs to the general record of educational publishing in the United States. The spelling book too is still in print.



# HOURS WITH NATHALIA CRANE

BY MARY SIEGRIST

A fragile bob-haired little girl playing with dolls and balancing a parrot on her forefinger or beating out on a small typewriter what solemn critics agree belongs to the genuine poetry of the world—this is the child genius, Nathalia Crane, who springs into verse full-fledged at ten years of age.

Never shall I forget the afternoon spent with Nathalia Crane and her parents in their home in Brooklyn. I rang the doorbell and was met by the poet's mother, a charming little woman of a distinctly Spanish type of beauty. In the doorway stood Nathalia, like some fairy sprite, smiling and holding out her hand in greeting. Presently her father appeared. At once I was aware of the thinker, the scholar and philosopher as well as the man of affairs.

Many—perhaps most—of the world's great poets have suffered the martyrdom of environment acutely hostile to poetry. Poor old Shelley, in his rum-pus with his father, cursed that blind parent up hill and down dale. Keats, Byron, and not a few others had similarly bitter experiences. This harrowing—sometimes blighting—process Nathalia Crane has been spared. The truth is that she has had wonderful fortune in her "selection" of parents. Her days are filled full of the complete understanding and friendship of both of them. All is joy, sanity, laughter, eager working and living and loving. "The gates are open here—I believe in keeping them so," quietly observed her father in the course of our conversation. "I know very little about

poetry and I used to wonder what the little girl was up to, sitting there writing at her little desk all day—but now I begin to understand—though I don't think Nathalia herself understands the full meaning of the things that come to her. She has some sort of color gift and she uses the words as an artist uses his paints. I believe that God's in this business."

"Tell me all about 'The Janitor's Boy,'" I suggested to Nathalia, "and how you came to write the poems." I was carrying a copy of the delectable book.

"There is a real janitor's boy and he's my friend. We have great fun together. Would you like me to read some of the poems?" she asked naively. We all expressed our pleasure at the idea. Taking the volume that I had—one that she later inscribed "With love, from Nathalia Crane"—the child seated herself on the divan in the deep bow window and began reading—almost intoning—in a kind of rhythmical chant from the little book. It was wonderful to hear the rich imagery, the spontaneous phrasing, the swift imagination fall from the lips of this child of ten.

The "History of Honey," her mother said, she wrote when she was nine years

old. The lines seemed incredible . . .

"The History of Honey"—by an aged mandarin,  
And I bought it for the pictures of the burnished bees  
therein.

In the ages of antiquity, each summer afternoon,  
They flew in golden convoys to the mountains of the  
moon.

\* \* \*

Imprisoned in this honey, aging as the cons wane,  
Are the souls of all the flowers waiting to be born again.

Every lotus, every poppy, every tulip, every rose,  
And those who sip the honey slip beyond all human  
woes.



NATHALIA CRANE

Next came "The First Story"—a marvelous tale of how "ten thousand years ago, a sunburned baby sprawling lay, a-playing with his toe," when suddenly he encountered an octopus "dangerous to pat—but the prehistoric infant never stopped to think of that." Then suddenly "a fluid black did flow," that squirted in the baby's eyes—that "made him gasp and blink—but to that octopus he held and drank up all the ink." Of course it followed that

The ink was in the baby—he was bound to write a tale;  
So he wrote the first of stories with his little finger nail.

"Nathalia uses her imagination about everything she sees," explained her mother. "From the time she was a baby we read poetry to her. She used to beat time with her hands to the measure. She often does it now in composing her poems. Do you know how she came to write 'The Blind Girl'? Tell her, Nathalia." The child began telling of a little blind cousin who visited them one Christmas, and then stopped suddenly, her voice full of tears. Her mother quickly took up the story. "Nathalia was greatly troubled because her cousin couldn't see our Christmas tree.

'Just think in your mind that it's beautiful and it will be beautiful,'" she told her.

To get her rhyme she sometimes beats time—a kind of rhythmic beating—with her hands and feet, her mother confided. Big words she will look up in the dictionary, but the rhyming dictionary is a thing unknown.

Certainly Nathalia Crane punctures the old idea that genius is necessarily morbid or abnormal. She is the fun-loving, healthy, happy youngster who, when not absorbed in writing, does everything that a little girl should do—skating, tennis, fishing, swimming, and having fun with her playmates.

Nathalia is of a long line of Puritan ancestry. On her father's side she is of English descent—that goes back to John Alden and Priscilla. Spain too is in her blood, on the maternal side. This ancestry, these parents of hers—have given her a robust heritage that would offset any tendency to abnormality of genius.

Already Nathalia's poems—including several short stories—have appeared in some fifty magazines. A mammoth scrapbook of press clippings attests the lively interest of the critics in her genius. These her father is keep-

ing for her "when she grows up." Just now she is totally unconcerned about them and seldom reads them. So fast do they accumulate that they are becoming a problem.

With wonder in her tones her mother told me of the book of her poems now being brought out by a publisher in England. "Think of that!" she exclaimed. "I think that God sends the poems into our little girl's heart."

Meanwhile Nathalia, when she is not sitting in her sunny room making poetry on her typewriter, plays with her dolls, engages in talking contests with the parrot, plays with her small friends and "The Janitor's

## TWO MOODS OF NATHALIA CRANE

### THE JANITOR'S BOY

Oh, I'm in love with the janitor's boy,  
And the janitor's boy loves me;  
He's going to hunt for a desert isle  
In our geography.

I'm in love with the janitor's boy,  
He's busy as can be;  
And down in the cellar he's making a raft  
Out of an old settee.

### THE BLIND GIRL

In the darkness who would answer for the color of  
the rose,  
Or the vestments of the May moth and the pilgrimage it goes!

In the darkness who would answer, in the darkness  
who would care,  
If the odor of the roses and the winged things were  
there!

In the darkness who would cavil o'er the question  
of a line,  
Since the darkness holds all loveliness, beyond the  
mere design!

Oh, night, thy soothing prophecies companion all  
our ways,  
Until releasing hands let fall the catalogue of  
days.

Boy," goes to parties, eats bread and jam, and has a thoroughly good time of the whole business of living. Surely "God is in this business"—making poetry through an elf? In memory I see Nathalia as she was on this memorable afternoon. I hear her happy contest with the parrot, see her perched on the high couch chanting her poems rhythmically, see her as she lounged on her bed, leaning against her mother, a piece of bread and jam in her hand. Then suddenly I seem also to see a woman who is older than Beatrix or Helen of Troy—a seer who knows the secrets that Buddha knew.



# IRELAND'S OWN SPECIAL SPOOK

BY ERIC WEBSTER

Fairies are everywhere, but banshees live only in Ireland. A banshee—in Gaelic, a *bain sidhe*—is a female fairy protector. All old Irish families have a banshee, or had one once upon a time. Sophisticated persons of modern education may deny the relationship, but your true Gael cherishes an inborn belief in the reality of “fairy followers.”

The duty of this plaintive ghost is to warn of disaster. When death approaches she goes wailing and beating her hands. Personages of high degree are bemoaned by a whole chorus of banshees. The “keen,” or funeral lament of the peasantry, imitates the cry. Sometimes one banshee “cries” for several branches of the same family.

There are those that say they have seen the brooding prophet crouching beneath shadowy boughs; they have heard her keening above the roof of the fated one, or mourning bitterly as she passes through the night. Usually she wears a red petticoat; an accompanying omen is a noiseless black coach drawn by headless horses.

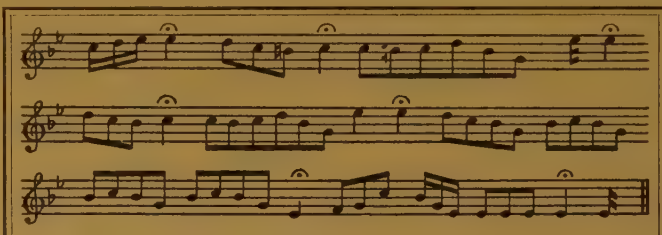
In the cottage of herdsman and crofter one can hear fairy lore as rich and imageful as any that ever charmed a race. In nearly every group of story-tellers there is usually one that can recite fables and mystical occurrences exactly as the neighborhood grandfathers bequeathed them, without the change of a word. Each county has special legends that have passed for centuries from mouth to mouth. With the Irish villager and farmer such things have time to mellow and gather meaning. Certain districts are known as “fairy places,” and the title is jealously claimed and guarded.

The colonists that arrived on the Green Isle uncounted years before Christ brought with them the myths that to-day are woven into the very woof of Ireland. The pagan Irish believed in the actual existence of *fer*

*sidhe*, or men fairies. Like Greece and Rome, Ireland had her mythological history. Fairies and mortals were in constant communication; sometimes they intermarried. Ancient literature contains innumerable stories of attachments between human beings and unearthly companions. Men of great affairs were guided by visions. In the days of St. Patrick belief in a fairy world prevailed even in palaces.

Friday is an unlucky day, because that is the day fairies have the most power for evil. Only the brave begin a journey on Friday, or

marry, or start a new job, for then zealous spirits are all about, working their malicious spells, “striking cattle with their elfin arrows, carrying off children,” or, most annoy-



THESE ARE THE NOTES OF A BANSHEE'S WAIL

ing conceit, stealing butter from one churn to enrich another.

A *poukha* is particularly the farmer's follower. This merry mischief-maker was the model for Puck, the prankish goblin that enlivened the forest in Shakespeare's “Midsummer Night's Dream.” In Norse mythology he is “Puki,” and in Danish, “Pokker.” If a *poukha* takes a fancy to a farmer he will till his field or grind his grain overnight. But if the farmer offends his self-appointed helper there is no telling what calamity will befall him through the *poukha*'s trickery.

The people of the fairy world dwell in caves among the hills, in woods, and on the banks of streams. Their land is Tirnan-Og, the Country of the Young. Some say that the *sidhe* of Erin are angels cast out from heaven—creatures not good enough for celestial company, yet not wicked enough for hell.

Of all the ghosts and sprites that people their land or imagination the country-folk of Ireland have always liked the banshee best. Many of them believe heartily in this devoted family fairy, whose lament foretells the visit of the Black Angel to one of her charges.

The practice of “keening” for the dead is not so general as it was, but professional women wailers are still employed in some Irish provinces. It is their duty to extol the departed, and in rhythmic phrases to bemoan his passing.

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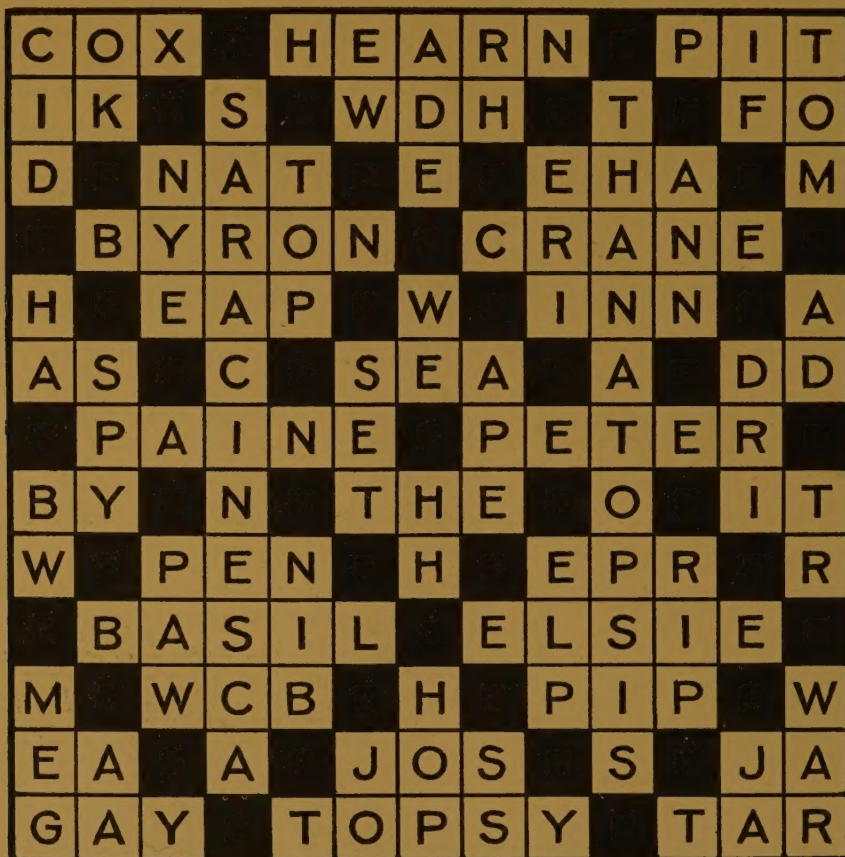
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INITIALS AND ABBREVIATIONS

## ACROSS

1. COX—Palmer Cox.
3. HEARN—Lafcadio Hearn.
10. IK—Ik Marvel.
12. WDH—William Dean Howells.
14. FO—Frederick O'Brien.
15. NAT—Nathaniel Hawthorne.
17. EHA—Eleanor Hallowell Abbott.
22. EAP—Edgar Allan Poe.
24. INN—"Tales of a Wayside Inn."
26. AS—"As You Like It."
30. DD—"Daniel Deronda."
36. IT—Ida Tarbell.
40. EPR—E. P. Roe.
42. BASIL—Basil King.
43. ELSIE—Elsie Dinsmore.
45. WCB—W. C. Bryant.
49. EA—Enoch Arden.
53. JA—Jacob Abbott.
54. GAY—Lady Gay in "Timothy's Quest."

## DOWN

2. OK—Omar Khayyam.
4. EW—Edward Westcott.
6. RH—Robert Hichens.
16. TOP—"Top o' the Mornin'" and "Top of the World."
17. ERI—Cap'n Eri.
18. ANN—"Ann Veronica."
21. HA—"The Education of Henry Adams."
23. WE—"We are Seven."
29. APE—Tarzan, the Ape Man.
30. DRI—"D'ri and I."
33. BW—Birnam Wood.
35. HH—Helen Hunt Jackson.
40. ELP—Edmund Lester Pearson.
41. RIP—Rip Van Winkle.
46. HOP—Hop o' My Thumb.
50. AA—Alice Adams.
52. SS—Sydney Smith.
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